

Progress in Education Partnership (PEP) Extending the Reach, Improving the Embrace

Proposals to USAID/India for India's Elementary
Schools: Attracting and Retaining Vulnerable Youth

FINAL REPORT

BEPS

Basic Education and Policy Support (BEPS) Activity

CREATIVE ASSOCIATES INTERNATIONAL²

IN COLLABORATION WITH

CARE, THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY, AND GROUNDWORK



United States Agency for International Development
Contract No. HNE-I-00-00-00038-00

Progress in Education Partnership (PEP)

Extending the Reach, Improving the Embrace

Proposals to USAID/India for India's Elementary Schools:
Attracting and Retaining Vulnerable Youth

Prepared by:

Norman Rifkin, M.S.
Cameron Bonner, Ph.D.
Ranjana Srivastava, Ph.D.

Prepared for:

Basic Education and Policy Support (BEPS) Activity
US Agency for International Development
Contract No. HNE-I-00-00-00038-00
Creative Associates International, Prime Contractor

April 10, 2002

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Following an Education Sector Review that was conducted in November 2001, a three-person team was assembled in March 2002, to work alongside Mission personnel to develop recommendations for phased Mission involvement in the education sector. The effort is detailed in this report, with the key findings described in three sections:

- Start-up activities that will enable the Mission to quickly engage with key institutions in the education sector.
- Proposed long term activities that would require further analysis and design.
- An implementation plan for further action including Mission staff requirements.

The team visited a broad range of officials and organizations in Delhi and in three sites in Karnataka: Bangalore (the state capital), Mandya District and Gulbarga District. The team was instructed to consider Karnataka as "illustrative" of sector issues and conditions that are likely to be found to a lesser or greater degree in other Indian states, particularly regarding the Mission's objective of educating vulnerable youth. The presumption was that recommended activities could be mounted elsewhere in India, should this become necessary.

The team recommended four start-up activities: two results packages and two research activities. These are:

1. Expansion of the UNICEF sponsored "Mysore" model water supply and sanitation program to selected elementary schools in northeastern Karnataka.
2. Education Technology Support, involving improving the effectiveness of radio mediated education in the northeastern districts of Karnataka; and more generalized capacity-building efforts aimed at assessing costs and effectiveness of other ICT education technologies such as television and computers.
3. Assessment of School Quality (Action Research). Development and testing of an instrument that would establish norms and identify the kinds of inputs that constitute minimal requirements for a quality school. This will later lead to equity- enhancing resource allocation models at the state, district, block and school levels.
4. Decentralization and School Governance. A study tour of decentralized educational systems and institutions in the United States, to examine the role of civil society in the oversight and control of schools and the roles of federal, state, and local educational bodies in the financing and management of education.

For each of the above activities, detailed scopes or work are provided as annexes to the report.

The team recommended two long-term activities.

1. Long-term Program Support to the National Education Reform, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), Education for All. Using northeastern districts of Karnataka as a “candidate” region for targeted assistance, USAID would contribute to the implementation of a far-reaching reform that focuses upon total enrollment of out-of-school youth, decentralization, and improved retention through better quality schools. SSA mirrors the Mission's strategy in the education sector. Very significant resources are required for this approach, and there are significant modality issues that would have to be resolved before USAID can move further with design of this effort.
2. To complement Mission program support to SSA, a companion activity is proposed which will provide financial and technical resources to strengthen decentralized management and planning, facilitate organizational restructuring, improve capacity for research and analysis, support discreet research studies, build knowledge of sector reform strategies and successes, monitor and measure results and, should Karnataka be selected as a focus for education support, link these efforts into planned USAID support to state fiscal management reform.

Contingency Support Options: In the event that USAID is unable to establish a modality to allow "vertical" (i.e., broadly systemic) program support to a finite state or region within a state, it may wish to support SSA "horizontally" by supporting an SSA functional theme within a more narrowly defined area. Social mobilization for out-of-school youth through bridge programs, remedial education and alternate schools is a particularly viable contingency option and could be implemented through Indian foundations and NGO's such as the Azim Premji Foundation and the Pratham Group. A long term contingency education support option that is focused upon social mobilization is described in the report. An additional option is to carefully assess the impact of the modest educational technology package, and apply it on a wider scale in several states.

The entire results package, which is displayed in an annex to this report, presents management implications for the Mission that are spelled out in a section on this subject. An implementation plan is also included which lays out dates for actions necessary to carry out further development of the recommended results packages.

Progress in Education Partnership (PEP)
Extending the Reach, Improving the Embrace

CONTENTS

Executive Summary	ii
Contents	iv
Acronyms	v
I. Introduction and Background	1
II. Rationale for the Proposed Interventions	2
A. Rationale for Geographic Focus on Northern Karnataka.	2
B. Challenges	4
C. Proposed Strategies and Their Links to Sub-IRs	4
III. Pre-Implementation (Start-up) Activities	11
A. Mysore-Model School Water & Sanitation Results Package	11
B. Education Technology Support Results Package	13
C. Assessment of School Quality (Action Research)	17
D. Decentralization & School Governance (A Research Study in Partnership with NIEPA)	20
IV. Long-term Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) Program Support	23
A. Support to the SSA Education for All Initiative	23
B. Companion SSA Support Activity	28
V. Contingency Education Sector Support Options	31
A. Social Mobilization Package for Out-of-school Children in Rural and Urban Areas	33
B. Other Contingency Option	35
VI. Management Implications for the Mission	35
VII. Implementation Schedule for Sector Engagement	38
Annexes	
1. People Contacted	40
2. SOW for Dot-EDU Assessment Team	41
3. SOW for School Quality Assessment Team	45
4. Decentralization and School Governance	49
5. Results Package Framework by Sub-IR	52
6. Budget Estimates for Suggested Activities	54

ACRONYMS

AASA	American Association of School Administrators
ANE	Asia & Near East Bureau (of USAID)
AP	Andhra Pradesh
BEPS	Basic Education & Policy Support Project
CA	Cooperating Agency/Cooperative Agreement (of USAID)
CINI	Children in Need Institute
CLC	Community Learning Centre (of Azim Premji Foundation)
CRS	Catholic Relief Services
CTO	Cognizant Technical Officer
DIET	District Institute of Education & Training
DPEP	District Primary Education Program
DSERT	Department of State for Educational Research & Training
EMIS	Education Management Information System
FSN	Foreign Service National (employee of USAID)
G/HCD	Global Bureau Human Capacity Development Center (of USAID)
GC	General Counsel's Office (of USAID)
GDA	Global Development Alliance
GDO	General Development Officer (of USAID)
GOI	Government of India
GOKKA	Government of the State of Karnataka
HPN	Health, Population & Nutrition Office (of USAID/India)
ICT	Information Communications Technology
IEQ2	Improving Educational Quality – Phase 2 Project
IQC	Indefinite Quantities Contract (of USAID)
IR	Intermediate Result
IRI	Interactive Radio Instruction
KKK	State of Karnataka
LOP	Life of Project funding
MinHR	Ministry of Human Resources Development
NCERT	National Council for Educational Research & Training
NEP	New Entry Professional (of USAID)
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
NIEPA	National Institute of Educational Planning & Administration
OSD	Office of Social Development of (USAID/India)
OYB	Operational Year Budget (of USAID)
PDEG	Program Development & Economic Growth Office (of USAID/India)
PEP	Progress in Education Partnership
PPC	Policy & Program Coordination Bureau (of USAID)
PRI	Panchayati Raj Institutions
RCO	Regional Contracting Office (of USAID)
RLA	Regional Legal Affairs Office (of USAID)
SARI	South Asia Region Initiative
SDMC	School Development & Management Committee
SIFPSA	State Innovation in Family Planning Services Agency Project
SO	Strategic Objective
SOW	Scope of Work
SSA	Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan
ST/SC	Scheduled Tribes/Scheduled Castes

I. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Following a review of the education sector that was conducted by The Mitchell Group in November 2001, USAID/India contracted with Creative Associates International, Inc. under its Basic Education and Policy Support (BEPS) activity, to undertake a further review that would propose specific activities, including performance indicators, targets, and a monitoring and evaluation plan, to support the Mission's proposed strategy in the education sector.

A team was identified including Dr. Cameron Bonner, Mr. Norman Rifkin and Dr. Ranjana Srivastava,¹ who began work in early March 2002. After preliminary meetings with USAID and World Bank officials in Washington, the team assembled in New Delhi on March 5. In an initial meeting with officials of USAID/India, the team's scope of work was modified significantly. In view of the Mission's objectives and its posture vis-à-vis the Ministry of Human Resources Development (MinHR) of the Government of India (GOI), the team was asked to engage in a "rolling" design that would result not in a major new education sector activity, but rather a phased blueprint for Mission action in the education sector. Since USAID/India had not been significantly engaged in the education sector for many years, it was felt that a more prudent approach would be to incrementally build relationships with the MinHR and other likely development partners based upon an evolving conceptual framework that began with the initial sector review. The blueprint would consist of three sections:

- Start-up activities that would enable the Mission to quickly engage with key institutions in the education sector.
- Proposed long-term activities that would require further analysis and design.
- An implementation plan for further action, including Mission staff requirements.

Each of the above would support and enable the Mission's SO 5, "enhanced opportunities for vulnerable people" and more specifically, IR 1, "improved access to education for vulnerable children."

Although the initial Mitchell Group team visited Chattisgarh and Karnataka, it was decided for this phase only to utilize Karnataka as a case study for Mission activities. Karnataka was chosen due to the high level of inequity with regard to access to education within the seven northern districts as compared to the remaining 19 districts in the State.² There is a high level of concern and commitment to resolving this problem among state and district officials in Karnataka. The team felt that the results of their eventual success in providing access to quality education to vulnerable children could serve as a model for other states in India. Throughout the consultation, Mission FSN staff (Renu Jain and Nalin Jena) served as advisors to the team. Mr. Jena represented USAID/ India during field visits. The team spent three days in the Bangalore area, meeting with state, district (Mandya), block and school level officials. The team also met with parents' groups and

¹ Rifkin and Srivastava were part of The Mitchell Group sector review team.

² These inequities will be described in detail in other parts of this document.

with private sector providers of educational technology. The team traveled to Gulbarga District for another round of field visits in that area.

II. RATIONALE FOR THE PROPOSED INTERVENTIONS

Intensive discussions with state and district officials gave the team better insights into the issues and concerns that states may face in their endeavor towards improving access to, and providing quality education to all children within the framework of the national policy towards universal elementary education. Although Karnataka is seen as a case study, the team felt that there was adequate justification for USAID to support the seven backward districts of Northern Karnataka for long or short-term support as the case might be, in addition to any other historically underserved state to be determined in consultation with MinHR/GOI. While the team's proposals build upon the challenges that Karnataka faces currently, the conditions prevailing in the seven less developed districts could be indicative of any lagging state or districts within it, given the wide variations each state reflects with respect to various indicators of elementary education development, whether quantitative or qualitative.

A. Rationale for Geographic Focus on Northern Karnataka

In the December 2001 Education Sector Review, seven "screens" were cited with regard to geographical site selection for future USAID activities.³ These are:

- High need. Areas where there are high numbers of child workers, out-of-school children, gender discrepancies or trafficking.
- Receptivity of state and local officials to proposed interventions.
- Credibility of the principal NGOs functioning within an area.
- Potential synergy with other USAID activities.
- Tolerance. Whether there is a need to develop understanding or other contemporary values within a region.
- Whether there is a paucity of donor assistance within the region.
- Whether there are ongoing complementary child labor activities in the region that are financed by the U.S. Department of labor.

Although the seven northern districts of Karnataka meet most of the above criteria, they do not meet all. The team felt that although there is sufficient rationale to mount activities in a relatively deprived region of a high performing state such as Karnataka, there is also rationale to justify activities in other relatively derived states. The Education Sector Review team visited, Chattisgarh, for example, a recently bifurcated state, which would also qualify under most of the criteria cited above. Under ideal circumstances it would be best to mount activities in at least two states; one a deprived region of a state that is progressive, receptive and high performing, and another a state that demonstrates high need, not only in terms of vulnerable children, but also in terms of the maturity of the human and physical infrastructure that supports the education system. We have

³ For further detail on this subject, see Education Sector Review, USAID/India. 12/7/01, pp 29-30.

focused upon Karnataka in this paper because (a) the team continues to believe that there are significant and serious inequities in the northern districts as compared to the remainder of the State, and; (b) because the team did not have the opportunity to visit other states. Conclusions reached in Karnataka can be viewed as illustrative, in the sense that the activities proposed for Karnataka could also be mounted in other regions of other states.

Karnataka's progress in the quantitative provision of elementary education and in enrollment has been remarkable, especially during the past decade. The enrollment rates for the state as a whole increased by 10 percentage points in just over half a decade. For rural females, the increase of 17 percentage points in the attendance rates has been even more dramatic. Nevertheless there are a number of problems that still need to be addressed and a number of new challenges that have gained importance as the system approaches universal coverage at the lower levels.

Regional disparities are still sizeable and perpetuate historical legacies. There are wide inter-district variations in enrollment and completion in elementary education within the state. The seven districts of North Karnataka (Raichur, Gulbarga, Bellary, Bidar, and Kopal from Hyderabad- Karnataka, and Bijapur and Bagalkote from the Bombay-Karnataka region) still lag behind the other regions in the proportion of children enrolled in, and completing, even four years of primary schooling. In Raichur and Gulbarga, only two-thirds of class-I children complete primary education as compared to about 85 percent for the state as a whole.

While the dropout rates within the lower primary stage for the state have been reduced to less than 5 percent, they range between 12 to 26 percent in the seven districts of this region. The highest levels of dropouts are at the upper primary stage and between classes 7 and 8. The transition to class 8 is impeded by the lack of availability of high schools within reasonable distances of residence as class 8 in Karnataka is structurally linked to the secondary level of education. Much of the dropout at this stage occurs in rural areas and among girls.

The last child census conducted in the state (2001) revealed that between one-quarter to one-fifth of the children (6-14 years) in three districts and between 12-18 percent of those in the remaining, were out of school, as compared to less than 1 percent in the southern districts of the state. The seven districts together account for as much as 60 percent of the 1.05 million out-of-school children in the state. Social practices such as child marriage abound in these regions, compounding the problems of full educational participation among girls.

Moreover, these districts are poorer, have a higher proportion of SC and ST population and had lower enrollment and literacy rates at the time of formation of the state. In spite of this, it appears that state government policy in the past did not effectively target its elementary education expenditure to these districts. Targeting of public expenditures to these districts would appear to be necessary in order to improve outcomes at the elementary education. "It may not be an exaggeration to say that Karnataka's success in

ensuring full enrollment and completion at the elementary level will depend to a large extent on educational progress in these seven districts [of the Hyderabad-Karnataka Region].”⁴ In fact, the Karnataka government has already identified the region for special and priority treatment. Some bold steps have already been initiated to give preferential treatment to the backward districts. These include, among others, establishing a separate directorate in the region to oversee the implementation of educational development programs and allocating fifty percent of the non-salary component of the elementary education budget of the state for new developmental programs in the seven districts. This reflects the existence of a very positive environment for initiating further reforms that make a significant difference to the educational experience of the state.

B. Challenges

The main challenges that Karnataka like many other states currently faces can be broadly categorized under five headings: (a) ensuring that all children enroll in, and complete the elementary cycle, (b) addressing equity issues, (c) developing a strategy for the development of educationally backward districts, (d) improving the quality of teacher preparation and support, and (e) strengthening decentralized systems of planning and management. Many of the initiatives addressing these issues through donor-assisted programs such as the District Primary Education Program (DPEP) are still at a nascent stage but have the potential to become effective instruments of change if accompanied with intensive follow-up and support. The team’s proposed strategies are derived from an assessment of schemes and innovations underway during the recent field visits to the state’s advanced and underserved districts. These strategies support the Mission’s SO5: 1R 1, and the GOI’s framework of SSA for ensuring universal elementary education which prioritizes focused attention to girls and other vulnerable groups and promotes centrality of quality in all interventions that facilitate improved learning outcomes.

Whereas a strong argument is made for mounting activities in Karnataka, the team recognizes that other states may have higher need. The team recommends that the Mission consider mounting activities in an additional state, perhaps Chhattisgarh, while mounting efforts to establish better equity in the provision of education services to the children of the northern districts of Karnataka.

C. Proposed Strategies and Their Links to Sub-IRs

Mainstreaming the Out-of-School Children

Formulating localized strategies for addressing the large number of out-of-school children and bringing them ‘back to school’ would be an important dimension of ensuring universal access and retention in the backward districts of Karnataka. Experience from DPEP in the state indicates the need for formulating special strategies

⁴ *Karnataka: Expanding and Strengthening the Education Sector in the Context of Economic Restructuring*. GOKK and The World Bank. August 2001. Also found in Eduvision, *Shaping Education in Karnataka – Goals and Strategies*, Bangalore, February 2002, p. 14.

for the hardest to reach groups such as nomads, seasonal migrants, tribal communities, working children and girls engaged in sibling care. The state appears to have already initiated some small efforts to get such children back to school. These include, among others, the organization of mobilization campaigns, transitional/bridge courses and residential camps, and alternative schools for children in small un-served habitations where a formal school may not be viable. Preliminary assessments indicate that the provision of such courses has helped in withdrawing children especially girls from work and sibling care and in ensuring their re-entry into mainstream schools. Although such initiatives address an important need of the state, they are still at a nascent stage and require considerable restructuring to make meaningful differences to the lives of the children. Further improvements to the programs will be required to ensure equitable access to education of acceptable quality.

USAID support for scaling up the current initiatives would provide an urgent and fully informed focus on the out-of-school children along with the reasons for their non-enrollment and non-completion. Improved information systems would facilitate more targeted and contextual planning and decision-making at state, district and sub-district levels. In addition, effective pedagogical interventions will provide ongoing support to teachers in diagnosing individual learning needs and taking remedial actions.

Strengthen School Capacity for Enrollment and Retention of Vulnerable Groups

To alleviate constraints to vulnerable youth access and persistence, school-level systems for assessing and addressing attendance problems must be improved. Specifically, school-community linkages need to be activated and made purposive. Improving school infrastructure is needed in many areas, for example, the provision of clean water supply and improved latrines (as under UNICEF's School Water & Sanitation program piloted in Mysore). Introduction of remedial and reinforcement courses in regular schools are other examples of efforts that schools can undertake specifically aimed at enrollment and retention difficulties.

The Mysore model of school water and sanitation, mentioned above, is much in demand by the communities and provides an excellent opportunity to promote health consciousness among children and parents. Its potential for impact on improving school attendance and reducing dropouts is encouraging, which tends to suggest the need for scaling up the initiative in districts where drop-out rates especially among girls continue to remain high.

Teacher Preparation and Learner Evaluation

The state's policy of ensuring universal completion of the elementary cycle by 2007 will increasingly demand a greater attention to the curriculum and its effective transaction, both at the lower and upper primary levels. This requires emphasis on evaluation of children's overall learning achievement levels as an area for on-going attention. Most states in India, including Karnataka, are in need of devising appropriate learner assessment tools and techniques for comprehensive continuous evaluation and setting up

mechanisms to improve teachers' and government officials' capacities to deal with differentiated learning needs of children.

Moreover, as inequalities in educational experiences are reflected most in differences in learning outcomes, there is a need to address gender and social equity issues throughout the educational process, from the content of the curriculum, to teacher training, classroom processes and school-community interactions. Findings of sample assessment of learning outcome levels in the state reveal major differences in achievements of SC/ST students at all grades of primary education. Effective remedial courses will thus be required to provide similar opportunities to the children from the communities where these challenges are the greatest. Such courses will assist these communities in raising their levels of capabilities to those of more advanced communities where there have been longer traditions of formal education.

English Language Teaching and ICT Interventions

The introduction of English in primary schools in the state calls for additional professional development of teachers. English as a subject language was, until recently, introduced only in class 5 in Karnataka. In most other states, teaching of English in government schools begins from class 6 onward. This policy has lately been revised by the state so that the language will be taught from class 3 from this academic year onward (July 2002).

The support for an Interactive Radio Instruction (IRI) component will be geared towards developing interactive learner friendly programs. In addition, it will require strengthening the capacities of state level officials to develop and implement strategies for the application of ICT at elementary schools for educational purposes.

Overall, the quality focus of elementary education reform will require devising and implementing meaningful in-service programs of professional development for teachers and resource institutions in monitoring, evaluation, strengthening of class room teaching and learning and student assessment practices at both lower and upper primary levels. Improved teacher capacities and mastery in subject knowledge and content is another area requiring urgent and ongoing attention. The pre-service training programs as well will require a rigorous academic review and renewal.

Systemic Reforms for Improved Decentralized Educational Services

Two recent moves of the state government towards empowerment of *Panchayati Raj* Institutions (PRIs) at the district, block and village levels and the creation of a School Development and Monitoring Committee (SDMC) in each school are significant steps in the devolution of power and authority at the district and sub-district levels. The decision regarding empowering schools for self-management through the SDMCs is well received across the state. Many such enabling conditions and factors leading to promulgation of Peoples' Acts are also visible in many other states.

The success of this move, however, calls for further strategic interventions to make school as the unit of planning and budgeting and for assessing and improving school quality at both lower and upper primary levels. This requires a redefinition of roles and responsibilities of the local authorities at different levels (from district to village and the school) as a precondition for their effective functioning. GOKKA (the Government of the State of Karnataka) is open to these reforms and have given indications of the need for strengthening the managerial and technical capacities of the education department personnel/committee members at various levels. This includes skills in policy research analysis and development, use of an information base for school developmental planning, performance-based budgeting and assessment of school quality. Technical support from USAID in the above stated areas could thus be expected to bring a change in the focus of parents, teachers and the government administrative personnel on outcomes of schooling and ensuring the attainment of learning objectives and school completion at various levels which is in line with the Mission's SO5-IR1 and the GOI's objective of UEE through community and school based management.

The following matrix provides a Results Framework for the activities proposed in this report. It classifies the activities under the sub-IRs to which they contribute, and describes the logical relationship to them. It also suggests a range of illustrative indicators (some of) which could be tracked for monitoring and reporting on sub-IR related results.

Results Framework for Proposed Activities

Sub Irs	Activities	Geographic Focus	Relationship to Sub-IR	Illustrative Indicators
5.1.1: Out-of-school children provided with alternate schooling & mainstreamed into formal elementary schools	1. SSA support	KKa w/emphasis on north districts, + other state	SSA's goal is to achieve education for all primary youth. This activity supports the sub-IR by targeting out-of-schoolers in specifically targeted areas through motivation, understanding and tailored programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • net enrollment rates • # of schools built or classrooms added • # of out-of-school children mainstreamed. • gender equity indicators • drop-out rate • repetition rate
	2. Social mobilization, bridge, remedial & reinforcement program support (contingency)	KKa (N) + other state; rural/urban	If this contingency option is pursued, it will contribute to the sub-IR through the interventions of non-government agents working directly with communities and their formal or alternate primary schools to enroll and retain out-of-school youth.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # community/alternative schools set up/functioning. • # residential camps/ motivation centers set up/ functioning. • # communities mobilized and local school oversight bodies sensitized to problems of vulnerable youth • # remedial/reinforce teachers trained & support systems in place • improved access, retention and transition rates • # of out-of –school children mainstreamed in formal schools
5.1.2: Strengthened formal & alternate school capacity for enrollment & retention of	1. Mysore H ₂ O/Sanit model expansion	KKa (N) + other state	This expansion of the Mysore-model water & sanitation program will improve system capacity to enroll & retain at risk youth through the provision of clean water and sanitary latrines, proven magnets for at risk youth, and particularly girls.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • enrollment and retention rates at targeted schools • retention rates for girls in the higher primary grades

Sub Irs	Activities	Geographic Focus	Relationship to Sub-IR	Illustrative Indicators
vulnerable children, especially girls	2. Improve educational technology capacities and radio programs	KKA w/emphasis on north districts	Parents who see schools as enhancing life's opportunities for their children will send them and keep them there. English is valued by many parents, as is the use of the tools of a "modernizing" society, e.g., computers, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> English test scores of targeted primary students and their teachers coefficients of interactivity in primary-level educational radio broadcasts existence of short/medium term plans for the spread of ICT-mediated education programs
	3. SSA support	KKA w/emphasis on north districts, + other state	SSA endeavors to improve system ability to identify and address the problems of out-of-school youth. This activity will directly contribute to this and thus the sub-IR.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> availability of texts and materials class size teacher training opportunities
5.1.3: Promoting system reforms for improved decentralized educational services such as EMIS, micro-planning & monitoring	1. Research & analyses (e.g., school quality; SSA institution and decentralization roles, governance & finance)	KKA w/emphasis on north districts	The research activities are intended to increase research capacity and knowledge related to primary school quality, a significant factor in attendance and retention; and exposure to alternate models of governing local school systems. Building knowledge in these two areas will promote better system operations regarding resource allocations, decentralized authorities and data/info use.	<u>School Quality:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduced inequities in school inputs more equitable resource allocation targeting of resources to needy communities retention rates of vulnerable children <u>Decentralization/Governance:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> wider range of decentralization/governance models considered for application in India continuing research/development relationships between Indian and American institutions and associations
	2. SSA support	KKA w/emphasis on north districts, + other state	Improved decentralized systems (e.g., micro-planning, local EMISs) are explicit objectives of SSA, which this activity supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> functioning and trained SMDCs effective civil governance of schools at the district, block and school levels

Sub Irs	Activities	Geographic Focus	Relationship to Sub-IR	Illustrative Indicators
	3. Companion SSA capacity & monitoring support	KKA w/emphasis on north districts, + other state	The SSA companion effort will provide extra resources to assure system reforms (favoring vulnerable youth), e.g., decentralization and management improvements, are realized. It will also aid program performance monitoring and results reporting.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use of data/analysis for decision-making at state/district levels • customized approaches for attracting/retaining vulnerable youth into schools • clearly defined roles regarding SSA objectives for the DIETs and SCERTs • use of research findings in formulating policies/program priorities • transparency of budgeting processes in the education sector

III. PRE-IMPLEMENTATION (START-UP) ACTIVITIES

The team is proposing a number of start-up activities for PEP. These are intended to accomplish several objectives. First, since the Mission has not been involved in education in India in any significant way for a long time, it is important to re-establish relationships with Indian partners in a participatory and planned manner. Second, despite the importance of care in building the partnership and without jeopardizing it, there are several areas of need that will benefit the longer-term objectives of USAID's support to the sector if addressed quickly. Third, by undertaking these start-up activities, USAID can demonstrate its commitment to the sector, its ability to be a rapid response force to identified needs and the collaborative style it will employ with its new partners. These activities will also inform the process and provide inputs to the development of the longer-term program of support to elementary education.

A. Mysore-Model School Water & Sanitation Results Package

Sub-IR linkage/relationship: Sub IR 5.1.2 (Strengthened formal and alternative school capacity for enrollment and retention of vulnerable children, especially girls)

Statement of the problem: Numerous elementary schools throughout India lack access to water that is safe to drink and latrines that are hygienic and suitably private. Absence of such facilities is known to contribute to low enrollment and retention, particularly among girls. On the other hand, when these amenities exist, parents and their children see the school as a safer, healthier and more "modern" environment for learning.

Proposed intervention: Installation of the "Mysore Model" water supply and sanitation program at selected elementary schools in northeastern Karnataka.

Objective: The objective of extending the Mysore School Water and Sanitation Program to the underserved districts of NE Karnataka is to attract and retain vulnerable youth (especially girls) in lower and upper primary schools, as well as to improve the health of all affected students and indirectly their parents.

Rationale: There is clear and consistent evidence, both from the international experience and the Mysore program assessment⁵, that provision of clean water, appropriately constructed latrines and supplementary health education messages delivered through the curriculum will result in better attendance and persistence of students, particularly girls, in primary schools. The effect of such an intervention is likely to be even more pronounced in northeast Karnataka given its less favorable, semi-arid climate and relative higher proportions of non-enrolled youth compared to southern Karnataka where the program has been concentrated to date.

⁵ Paul's Consultancy Services, "Zilla Panchayat, Mysore Impact Assessment of the School Sanitation Programme, Survey & Analysis Report," February 2002, Mysore, Karnataka.

Description: The program⁶ involves the expansion of the water and sanitation program being implemented by UNICEF and its partners in southern Karnataka to the northern districts of the state. Starting in 1996 with only 6 primary schools initially, the program is currently being followed in 450 locations. Three water supply methods are being used according to local conditions: extension of a community's existing piped water system (least expensive), a bore hole with a project engineered force lift hand pump, and rain water harvesting involving guttering and catchment cisterns.

The project's most visible component is the introduction of a clean water supply and hygienic, gender-sensitive latrines into the school compound. Beyond this, however, is the program's attention to broader health, nutrition and hygiene issues by engaging students, teachers and community members in advocacy and education efforts. Classroom lessons focus on specific health and hygiene issues, students decorate their schools with health and environment messages, a student "cabinet" directs and oversees activities such as school kitchen gardens, water and latrine maintenance and special environmental initiatives. There is also special attention to community outreach through the "TCCPC" (teacher-to-child, child-to-parent, parent-to-community) strategy.

Modality and Partners: USAID could support UNICEF in carrying out an expansion of the program, assuming Regulation 16 issues are properly addressed. Since this agency has the experience, staff and institutional capacities for implementing the program, its ability to extend its efforts geographically should not be problematic. Karnataka education officials are very supportive of the program, but wish to become actively involved in its expansion. Therefore, recognizing the role each party must play, a tripartite agreement with USAID, UNICEF and the Karnataka government officials is recommended.

Besides USAID, UNICEF and Karnataka state officials, other key partners in the program include the NE Karnataka Regional Education Directorate, other local education and district *panchayat* officials, and possibly NGOs operating in the project areas. Furthermore, if USAID decides to expand its education program support beyond northern Karnataka to districts in another state, program and implementation agreements will need to be fashioned following dialogue with the additional partners.

Proposed/Estimated Duration of Activity:

- 2 to 3 years

Results and Indicators:

- increased enrollment and retention rates at targeted schools
- increased retention rates for girls in the higher primary grades

Design Issues:

- Frame an implementation plan with UNICEF and Karnataka State Office of Education to adapt the Mysore School Water and Sanitation Program for schools and

⁶ See "School Sanitation, An Experiment in Mysore District," Zilla Panchayath, Mysore, Karnataka.

communities in the NE region, taking into account the interests of local education officials for a more active (capacity-building) role in program execution.

- Decide if and when USAID will expand its sector program support to another state, and determine the interest of this state to participate in the Mysore program.
- Reach agreement on roles and responsibilities of the implementing partners (UNICEF, Departments of Rural Development and Health, State Office of Education, district and local education staff, local NGOs and communities), including the program requirement that only 50% of project costs can be met by external funding partners.
- Assess issues of maintenance and sustainability of the school water and sanitation improvements, including both the infrastructural and (extra) curricular program elements.
- Adopt a scheme for training project participants in procurement and contracting for the construction, introduction of the other program elements and results monitoring.
- Establish firmer cost estimates for application of the program to the drier areas of NE Karnataka, and, if appropriate, the additional targeted districts.
- Develop criteria for the selection of schools, with particular emphasis on schools with relatively high non-enrollment and dropout rates for girls.

Key Next Steps:

- Conduct discussions with GOI partners to secure agreement in principle to support expansion of the program in northeast Karnataka and/or elsewhere
- Reach agreement with UNICEF on the specifics of the grant, including funding and procedures for extending its program to NE Karnataka districts (by April 2002)
- Dialogue with the Karnataka Department of Education and the NE Karnataka regional education on roles and criteria for implementation of the program (by May 2002).

B. Education Technology Support Results Package

Sub-IR Linkage/Relationship: Sub IR 5.1.2 (Strengthened formal and alternative school capacity for enrollment and retention of vulnerable children, especially girls)

Statement of the Problem: Bringing technology into the classroom to enhance learning offers both enormous promise and complex cautions. To be of real and lasting benefit, ICT-mediated instructional techniques need to be pedagogically sound and cost-effective. Many attempts are being made in Karnataka to supplement classroom teaching with radio, television and computer-aided instruction, but along with these innovations serious issues have emerged. Radio instruction needs to become more engaging of the pupils and their teachers. The delivery modes, infrastructure needs and cost factors of computer and television-mediated education require rigorous analysis. Capacity in each of these areas needs to be strengthened.

Proposed Intervention: Support to the Karnataka State Office of Education to improve the effectiveness of radio-mediated education in the northeastern districts of Karnataka, with particular and initial attention to standard 3 English; and more generalized capacity

building efforts aimed at assessing costs and effectiveness in Karnataka of other ICT education technologies, such as television and computers.

Objective: The principal objective of the Education Technology Support effort is to deliver high quality interactive English instruction to Standard 3 students throughout the under-served districts of northeastern Karnataka. Building on experiences and relationships established in this intervention will be two additional objectives: enhancement of the educational radio programs currently employed in the region, and strengthening state and district-level capacities to develop cost and pedagogically effective strategies for the introduction of appropriate ICT educational innovations in primary schools.

Rationale: This Results Package directly addresses quality and affordability issues in primary education. Educational radio is already being used in the target region, but is likely having less than optimal effect. Schools that are seen by children and their parents as offering quality, opportunity-enhancing education are attractive to them. Knowledge of English is valued by many parents of rural and urban Karnataka, as shown by recent household surveys and the popularity of English-medium private schools. The offering of a high quality, interactive English radio broadcast targeted at primary pupils and their teachers will respond to these interests. In addition, with the opportunity to influence the further development of the existing educational radio programs in the region, the efforts of USAID and its partners can be greatly leveraged with only marginal additional costs.

USAID is uniquely positioned to provide support in this effort, as it has devoted vast resources over the past 25 years to the development of an effective interactive radio instruction model that had been used successfully in many countries, particularly at the primary level. The model has also been copied and applied by other donor agencies. It is a proven intervention that can boost student learning and teacher knowledge, especially in the areas of language and mathematics.

The importance of ICT more generally is significant to Karnataka. The ICT train is moving fast, propelled by the success of the technology sector in the state. There is strong corporate and non-profit/NGO interest in capitalizing on the sector's fortune by bringing ICT innovations into the classrooms. There is no doubt that many of these technologies should and will have useful roles to play in education, from the lowest to the highest levels. It is also evident, however, from lessons in the US and many other developed and developing countries, that such new classroom interventions must be done with care and attention to a multitude of factors, chief among which are development and maintenance costs, sustainability, teacher preparation and acceptance and pedagogical value-added. Karnataka is no different, and issues of cost-benefit and pedagogical effectiveness especially must be critically weighed. Despite the high priority given to education in Karnataka, there are still serious resource constraints and infrastructure gaps that impose the need for analytic discipline on the wide-scale application of any new classroom technology. USAID could usefully contribute to capacity-building in this arena.

Description: The Education Technology Support Results Package will have two distinct but related components. First, it will develop an interactive English radio program for Standard 3 through 5 students located in northeastern Karnataka. It will build upon the *Keli Kali* educational radio programming aimed at Standard 4 pupils, which started in the districts of Gulbarga and Dharwad in August of 2001. The English broadcasts will demonstrate the potential for increased learning when interactive program (question-response) techniques are employed, when teachers are used as instructional interlocutors between the radio lesson and pupils, and when supplementary teacher and pupil lesson guides are made available. The development of the new approach and programs will be done in close partnership with those involved in *Keli Kali*, including the All India Radio personnel responsible for radio frequency and schedule allocations. Through the interaction of the partners, and the program developers in particular, the improvements realized in the radio English programs will be spread as appropriate to other subject areas; mathematics should be a prime candidate for this expansion.

The second component of the Package will work principally at the state level to strengthen capacity to develop strategies and plans for the application of ICT at primary schools for educational purposes. Due to ICT developments and high levels of private and public interest in technology-mediated learning, there is an urgent need for state officials to be able make informed judgments on the potential and consequences of each new innovation as it emerges. The technology train is on the move in Karnataka. Several efforts are already underway to bring computer education and computer-assisted learning into secondary and elementary school classrooms. There are proposals for introducing TV out/Voice return systems to promote greater learning achievements. Many Indian firms are developing educational software that will soon hit the market. Decision-makers must have access to the analysis and information that will inform them on what, when and where such innovations are appropriate and affordable for primary schools and their communities. This results package will introduce the skills needed for such judgments to be made.

Since both aspects of the activity involve strong elements of capacity building, it will be essential to include national and state institutions in its formulation from the outset. In particular, NCERT and the Central Institute of Educational Technology (CIET) need to be involved, as do their state-level counterpart organizations.

Modality and Partners: An appropriate vehicle for the USAID Mission to implement this Results Package is the Dot-EDU component of the central Dot.Com project. Initial discussions have indicated that Dot-EDU is appropriate and capable in addressing the needs of this effort. Through field support funds, the Mission could rapidly access the resources of Dot-EDU and thereby tap into USAID partners' long experience in the field of instructional radio and other educational technologies. (See website: http://www.usaid.gov/info_technology/dotcom/dotedu.html).

Besides the expertise represented in Dot-EDU, partners in the effort will include the USAID mission, G/HCD, Karnataka State Office of Education, Northeast Directorate of Education, local district and block-level educators and officials, All India Radio,

teachers, corporate and NGO representatives, and other Indian organizations with experience in ICT educational applications such as NCERT and CIET.

Proposed/Estimated Duration of Activity:

- Initial assessment team: 1.5 months
- Follow-on effort: 3 years or more, depending on scope of ICT involvement beyond radio.

Results and Indicators:

- Evidence (perhaps through action research studies) that parents and their children find schools more inviting due to the introduction of educational technology mediated instruction.
- Measurable improvements in English of targeted primary students and their teachers.
- Higher degrees of interactivity in all primary-level educational radio broadcasts.
- Existence of short and medium term plans for the spread of other ICT-mediated education programs in Karnataka, based on sound pedagogical, cost-effectiveness and sustainability principles.

Design Issues:

- Since partnering and capacity-building are central to all aspects of the results package, the Dot-EDU assessment team must devote significant attention to identifying Indian individuals and institutions that can and should be involved in the effort
- Exploration is needed of successful radio education programs being implemented elsewhere in India, for example, the English interactive radio programs being developed and used by the Centre for Learning Resources in Pune.
- Interests and plans of the non-governmental profit and non-profit sectors in ICT should be assessed, especially as they apply to Karnataka; particular focus on the efforts of the Azim Premji and Indian-American foundations is recommended
- While expressions of interest for the intervention were received from Karnataka state and district officials, more detailed and wider dialogue is needed before the design can be finalized and ownership by Indian partners assured.

Key Next Steps:

- Discuss and refine the proposed Scope of Work included in the Annex with key stakeholders, especially the cognizant staff of NCERT, CIET and the Karnataka State Office of Education (April 2002).
- Issue a Task Order to Dot-EDU for an Assessment Team to design an education technology results package based on the finalized scope of work (April 2002).
- Following the Assessment Team's work, conduct a dissemination workshop for state and central partners to learn of the outcomes and guide the formulation of a comprehensive intervention strategy and support program.
- Based on the team's assessment and the outcomes of the dissemination workshop, develop a multi-year Task Order for implementation of the 3-year program (August 2002).

C. Assessment of School Quality (Action Research)

Sub-IR Linkage/Relationship: Sub IR 5.1.2 (Strengthened formal and alternative school capacity for enrollment and retention of vulnerable children, especially girls).

Statement of the Problem: Although many vulnerable children enter school, most repeat grades and eventually abandon their schooling. This problem is particularly acute among girls.

Objective: Better system capacity to retain vulnerable children in school by identifying and targeting specific quality-related school problems.

Rationale: IR 1 of SO 5 seeks, *inter alia*, to strengthen school capacity for the retention of vulnerable children, especially girls. There is a long, established relationship between school quality and student persistence. The Commissioner of Education of the Government of Karnataka is aware of the importance of assessing school quality and has asked USAID to assist in mounting an action study that will ultimately enable the state ministry to allocate its resources to the districts, blocks and schools that are most in need. Although this study was specifically requested by the Commissioner of Education in Karnataka, this type of study would certainly be relevant in a state such as Chhattisgarh.

Description: This study directly supports SSA activities related to EMIS, school mapping and the development of equity enhancing resource allocation models. It is envisioned that such a study would take place in three phases:

1. Development and testing of an instrument that would establish norms and identify the kinds of inputs that constitute minimal requirements for a quality school;
2. Application of the instrument state-wide through a comprehensive school mapping activity.
3. Based upon analysis of the school mapping activity, development of equity enhancing resource allocation models at the state, district and block levels.

The study should be undertaken under a centrally funded activity such as BEPS or the upcoming EQUIP activity. It will require a combination of U.S. and Indian researchers and will have three broad purposes:

- To enable greater intra-state equity with regard to the quality of schools.
- To strengthen Indian capacity to undertake similar studies; and
- To strengthen state, district and block capacity in the planning and management of scarce educational resources.

In the second phase of the action study the results obtained from the school quality assessment will be analyzed and presented within the context of a computerized school mapping study that will graphically demonstrate inequities with regard to inputs and efficiency indicators within the state.

The third phase of the study will focus upon resources needed to level the field among school districts, blocks and schools. The data will need to be analyzed first at the state level to determine how resources will need to be allocated among districts in order to reach minimal quality levels. Although resources will be more equitably allocated to districts, decision-making will reflect school level data from throughout the state. This allocation process will be repeated at the district and block levels in keeping with the MinHR decentralization plans. Training of trainers will be required throughout the state.

At the completion of the first phase of the action study, the Mission will need to evaluate whether it wishes to proceed within the context of an action study, or whether it wishes to develop a “companion” project to enable phases two and three which will require computer equipment and significant training oversight by short term T.A.

Modality and Partners: This activity could be mounted as a unilateral buy-in to a centrally funded project in partnership with the National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration (NIEPA) or with the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT). The advantage of the latter, which the team recommends, is that NCERT relates directly to counterpart organizations for educational research and training at the state and district levels. Another partner is the Department of Elementary Education and its branches at the state, district and block levels. The study could also be mounted as a Mobis-contracted effort. Although a buy-in is possible for the second and third phases, the Mission may wish to retain more control in latter phases through a MOBIS or direct contract. This decision can wait.

Proposed/Estimated Duration of Activity:

The first phase of this activity requires a two-person U.S. team working with a two person team from NCERT. The U.S. team should be given one week in the U.S. to study previous efforts at school quality assessment in the United States and then two-three weeks in India working alongside of NCERT staff (one week in Delhi, one week in Karnataka, one week in another state to be determined) to develop an experimental model. The Indian staff or their state level counterparts will be responsible for administering the experimental model within one district in both states over a period of six weeks. The U.S. team will then return to Delhi for a period of three weeks to review, with NCERT researchers, the results of the experimental mode, design the final data format, and work out a plan, with Karnataka Education Ministry officials to carry out the assessment throughout the state. When the assessment is completed, it is essential that NCERT and its state level counterparts develop a plan to disseminate the findings of the study throughout the state. It is important that all of the persons and institutions participating in the study be apprised of the results. No cost or duration for phases two and three are given since they will depend upon modality and the results of phase one.

Results and Indicators:

The first phase of the study will produce data that will enable the Karnataka Education Ministry to reduce inequities in school inputs throughout the state. Results of phases two and three will produce more equitable resource allocation models that will target resources to those communities that need them most. Vulnerable children will move through the system more efficiently.

Although this research activity will provide the state government with the data it needs to allocate resources more effectively, the study may yield other information that points to a need for more specific interventions such as teacher training, for example. In this sense, the school quality assessment research may generate more targeted assistance through SSA or through other companion activities.

The following represent illustrative indicators of quality that will be measured under the school quality assessment. This list is neither inclusive nor exclusive. Although similar quality assessments have been developed elsewhere in the world,⁷ the indicators that are used in this assessment must be specifically tailored to the needs of Karnataka, and if possible to specific districts and blocks. For example, in those areas where children abandon schooling in order to engage in the agricultural harvest, schools may need strong remedial programs in order to bring students back into the mainstream. Student performance will reflect a variety of non-school factors such as socio-economic levels. For this reason, and also because standardized testing data may not be consistent throughout the state, the study eschews student level indicators as a measure of school quality. Attention will need to be given to means of collecting and aggregating the data at the school, block, district and state levels.

Standard Input-Level Indicators

- Class size
- Training level of teachers⁸
- Availability of quality teaching materials and texts.
- Average distance to school.
- Functioning School Management Development Committee.
- Qualifications and experience of school head.
- Availability of furniture and equipment
- In-service training
- Access to potable water and clean latrines.
- School security⁹

⁷ FQEL, (Fundamental Quality and Equity Levels) in West Africa, for example.

⁸ Objective measurement of subject matter capacity would be better, but is probably impossible to measure.

⁹ School security is an important factor for the girl child.

Efficiency Indicators¹⁰

- Repetition rates.
- Drop-out rates¹¹
- Pass rates at the level of transition to secondary school.¹²

Design Issues:

Choice of an Indian partner organization is critical. Whereas NIEPA may be better capable of contributing effectively to the design and administration of a model, NCERT and its counterparts at the state and district levels would appear to be the institutions that would benefit most in terms of knowledge building and eventual decision making at the state level and below.

The Mission should await the Equip project, which will provide a broad array of institutional contractors with considerable experience in school quality assessment.

The role of the state, district and block governments, along with *Panchayati Raj* institutions is another issue that will have to be carefully studied in design.

The key issue, however, is the question of whether the Mission wants to mount phase 1 as an independent research study, and conduct phases 2 and 3 as a projectized activity, perhaps under a Mobis, or whether it wishes to fold all three phases into a single research activity. The latter may be appropriate in view of OSD's management concerns.

Key Next Steps:

- Since IEQ2 has had considerable experience in school quality assessment, await Equip, which will almost certainly include the major IEQ2 institutions to gain the best possible technical assistance for implementation.
- Award a task order through Equip as soon as it is approved.

D. Decentralization and School Governance (A Research Study in Partnership with NIEPA)

Sub-IR Linkage/Relationship: The third sub-IR of SO 5, IR 1, is to promote systemic reforms for improved decentralized education services.

Introduction: In keeping with the objectives of SSA, which includes a devolution of authority to the state and local levels, the Ministry of Education of the State of Karnataka

¹⁰ Efficiency indicators may not be directly linked to school quality. They may reflect a variety of non-school factors within a given community. Data collected through comparisons of efficiency will generally be more useful within a given District than at the State level.

¹¹ Drop-out rates should be measured at three levels consistently through out the state.

¹² Grade seven historically, but grade eight under the recent re-structuring.

has requested that USAID cooperate in understanding the relationships among school boards, local education officials and the state education agency.

Objective: The objective of this study is to strengthen the capacity of state, district, block and school level officials to better manage the education process through interaction with each other and with representatives of the community (*Panchayats* and School Management Development Committees).

Rationale: The education system in India has much in common with the education system in the United States. In the U.S., federal and state governments have empowered communities to finance and run their own school systems, while using state and federal funds to complement those of the community and to encourage equity or further national or state objectives. Through the SSA, India wishes to move in this direction. It wishes to empower citizens to oversee and manage schools through women's groups and *Panchayati Raj* institutions. It is logical, that the U.S. with its unique and long-term experience in decentralized education, cooperate with the Min HR to assess whether America's experience can be applied to the Indian environment.

Description: This activity will finance a study tour that is directed by a team of two U.S. education specialists who are well versed in issues relating to the roles of school boards, state governments and the federal government in the financing and management of education.

A team of Indian education professionals representing the national, state and district governments, and several district *Panchayati Raj* members will visit a selection of U.S. rural, suburban and urban school boards, state government officials and the U.S. Department of Education to gain a thorough understanding of U.S. practices and processes with regard to the financing, management and community oversight of education. With the cooperation of the U.S. specialists, the team will apply this knowledge to the Indian milieu in an effort to collectively assess whether there are any desirable applications of U.S. practices in India. The team will also determine whether there are lessons learned from India that may be applicable in the United States. The team, including the U.S. education specialists, will prepare a report and return to India to review their findings with representative state, district, block and school officials, including the *panchayats* at various levels and the SDMC.

Modality and Partners: This study will be unilateral and can be undertaken through a funding source/activity to be identified. It should attempt to establish institutional partnerships among appropriate U.S. professional associations such as the National Education Association (NEA), the American Association of School Administrators (AASA), the National Association of School Boards and appropriate organizations in India. In the absence of Indian professional associations, partnerships should be established with the GOI at the national level through NIEPA and select state ministries of education. Enduring linkages with Indian and American professional associations and organizations should be a by-product of this study.

Proposed/Estimated Duration of Activity:

U.S. two-person team:

- Two weeks preparation for Indian team visit to U.S. (U.S. based)
- Two weeks conducting research and visitations in the U.S.
- Two weeks in India with time divided at national, state, district, block and school levels.

Indian six-person team:

- Two weeks preparation for U.S. Visit
- Two weeks conducting research and visitations in the U.S.
- Two weeks in India with time divided at national, district, block, and school levels.

Results and Indicators:

This activity will result in better mutual understanding of school governance issues in the U.S. and India. It is also expected that continuing research and development relationships will be fostered among key Indian institutions and American institutions and associations that relate to school governance issues. Such relationships should receive continued support through centrally funded activities such as the University Development Linkages Program (UDLP.) The Secretary of Education has stated that India is seeking an effective model for school governance. It is expected that this study will generate an additional model (or models) that will support the GOI's efforts toward decentralization and community involvement in the management of schools.

Design Issues: Selection of appropriate state, district and block level participants, including *Panchayat* representatives is an issue. All participants will require fluent English language capacity and a thorough understanding of the processes and issues in the governance of education at their respective levels. It would be ideal to include an SMDC representative if an appropriate participant can be identified (geographic area to be determined).

Selection of U.S. specialists will be critical to the success of this study. They should not only be familiar with state and community administrative processes, but also with the roles and operations of elected school boards. The team should be well versed in how the federal government interacts with states, and how states interact with communities. The team should be conversant with methods used by states and school boards, particularly in urban school systems, to improve equity in the quality of education to disadvantaged children. A thorough knowledge of U.S. professional education associations is required.

Key Next Steps: This type of study was requested by the Commissioner of Education of Karnataka, but is applicable throughout India and will reinforce the decentralized governance objectives of SSA. The next step is to review the study with the Karnataka Commissioner of Education and with NIEPA. Each will want to modify and improve upon the scope of work. When agreement has been reached among the two organizations, the research study should be presented by NIEPA to the MinHR for

approval. Following approval, the scope of work should be transmitted to the selected funding source/activity for implementation.

IV. LONG-TERM (SSA) PROGRAM SUPPORT

A. Support to the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA, “Education for All”) Initiative

Sub-IR linkage/relationship: The Mission’s SO 5, IR I is “to improve access to education”. The first sub-IR is to provide out-of-school children with alternate schooling and mainstream them into formal elementary school. The second sub-IR is to strengthen school capacity for enrollment and retention of vulnerable children, especially girls. The third sub-IR is to promote systemic reform for improved, decentralized educational services. SSA totally and completely reflects these objectives.

Statement of the problem: According to the 2001 census, 59 million Indian children in the 6-14 age group are not in school. About 18 million of them are working for wages. Although this is well below previous estimates of 110 million, it is a startling and unfortunate statistic. Although the GOI has made good progress within the past five years, there is still a long way to go.

Objective: The objective of this activity is to carry out specific performance-based activities in a state or part of a state that will enable the GOI to (i) give vulnerable children, especially girls, improved access to education, (ii) keep these children in school, and (iii) promote systemic reform particularly relating to EMIS and micro-planning.

Introduction: SSA is among the largest public sector initiatives ever mounted in India. It builds upon the successful experience of the World Bank-sponsored District Primary Education (DPEP) Program which covered about half of the country’s districts, by extending it nationwide and also to upper primary school which is now defined as grades 5-8. Under DPEP, for example, there was a seven-fold increase in enrollment in DPEP districts in Rajasthan. DPEP provided more than 10,000 primary schools, 56,000 alternative schools and 20,000 bridge courses.

SSA seeks to provide useful and relevant education to for all children in the 6-14 age group by 2010. It uses a variety of means to accomplish this, including government schools, alternative schools, Education Guarantee Centers, and bridge (“back to school camps”) schools. The goals are to have all children in school by 2003, all complete five years of primary schooling by 2007, all complete eight years of schooling by 2008. All of the above includes satisfactory quality with an emphasis upon education for life.

SSA is a decentralized approach. It allows states to formulate context-specific guidelines within the overall framework. It encourages districts within states to reflect local specificity. It encourages local need based planning based on broad national policy norms. The emphasis is upon mainstreaming out-of- school children through diverse strategies. The thrust is on closing gender and social gaps and a total retention of all

children in school. Furthermore, SSA seeks to make the educational system useful, absorbing, and non-alienating from a child's natural and social environment.

SSA seeks to enhance equity and quality through decentralized management structures and governance that places high value upon the contribution and oversight of parents groups at the school level. There is great emphasis upon school mapping and micro-planning at succeeding levels of political structure.

SSA is directly and totally in synch with USAID's program strategy in the education sector. It focuses upon vulnerable children, upon systemic reform through decentralization, and upon improvement of retention through better quality schools.

Rationale:

The GOI MinHR has adopted a national strategy to achieve the results stated in USAID's program strategy. It is, arguably, one of the best-conceived reforms of its kind ever developed. According to World Bank sources, The GOI MinHR has the resources to fund its strategy over a two year period, but will lack the funds to implement its strategy beyond that date. It has invited donors to contribute¹³ resources to the realization of its objectives. Since the MinHR's objectives coincide with those of USAID, it makes sense for us to operate within their framework. There are issues relating to the modality of USAID's participation, which will be elaborated in a later section.

Description: The team visited the State of Karnataka in order to gain a better appreciation of the issues that will be addressed by SSA. Although Karnataka is seen as a case study, and there is no specific plan or government authorization to operate in that state, the team felt that there is adequate justification to finance Karnataka activities in the seven northern districts:

- which are relatively impoverished,
- where there is very high SC/ST presence,
- where there is a high rate of child labor, along with seasonal migration,
- where 60,000 children are out-of-school,
- where there is little history of NGO involvement in the education sector, and
- where decentralization issues linked to the merger of DPEP with the government's program abound.

The highly committed Commissioner of Education for Karnataka has assured us that were we to focus upon Karnataka through SSA, that we could jointly develop a series of performance benchmarks or indicators in any or all of the northern districts.

Funds permitting, it would also make sense to undertake support of districts in states that are less advanced than Karnataka in terms of planning, such as Chattisgarh. Whereas the need is greater in such states, especially in terms of the Mission's third sub-IR, which

¹³ Although there does not appear to be a solid minimum threshold for participation in SSA, the government expects "significant" contributions, which we have interpreted to be \$10 million per annum for a place at the table.

relates to promotion of systemic reforms for improved educational services such as EMIS or micro-planning, performance targets would need to be realistic in terms of the local setting. In less advanced states, proportionately more resources will need to be targeted toward capacity building.

Benchmarks and indicators will be developed in terms of

- Access indicators
- Equity indicators
- Efficiency Indicators
- Quality Indicators
- Management Indicators

Illustrative access indicators are:

- Net enrollment rates
- Numbers of schools built or classrooms added

Illustrative equity indicators are:

- Numbers of out-of-school children who are mainstreamed
- Gender equity indicators

Illustrative quality¹⁴ indicators are:

- Availability of texts and materials
- Class size
- Teacher training

Illustrative efficiency indicators are:

- Drop-out rate
- Repetition rate

Illustrative management indicators are:

- A functioning and trained School Management Development Committee
- Effective civil governance¹⁵ of schools at the district, block and school levels

USAID does not yet know whether the government will authorize support of districts in Karnataka. Nor does it know which states it will be asked to support. In the absence of such specificity, we must work generally, within a conceptual framework.

¹⁴ For the purposes of this report, quality will be assessed in terms of inputs such as availability of text books, class size, etc. Outputs such as the persistence rate, drop-out rate, and pass rates will be considered as indicators of Efficiency. There is a very close relationship between quality and efficiency. Many students drop out due to poor quality.

¹⁵ Civil governance of schools implies a greater role, under decentralization, for elected Panchayit members in the oversight of schools. This is intended under the SSA.

Modality: The mode of financing USAID assistance to or through SSA is uncertain and will need to be clarified over the next several months. In keeping with its culture, the operational philosophy of the GOI, especially the Education Ministry is imbued with a spirit of self-reliance. The MinHR has made clear its intent that bilateral donor assistance to the education sector be delivered through the national SSA reform. It will not consider grants to individual states. The MinHR has been somewhat ambiguous about its willingness to accommodate other than budget support. The GOI may be willing to consider projectized assistance within SSA, but prefers to operate entirely within its own operational framework.

There are constraints to projectized assistance. Funding will need to be tracked and subject to external audit. It is unclear, at this time, whether the GOI will accommodate external audits within the SSA Framework. There appear to be ways of channeling resources through Societies or Banks, but these arrangements go beyond the capacity of this team to consider. The team expects that modality issues will be clarified over time. The MinHR seems amenable to beginning a series of “pre-implementation” activities related to research, water and sanitation, and also to certain types of educational technology cooperation including computer-mediated education.

The team believes that rapid implementation of activities such as these, that are directed toward MinHR priorities, will establish a climate of trust, respect and cooperation. It is critical, in India, that all activities be mounted in a spirit of cooperation with Indian institutions, especially in the education sector. Mission staff will need to cultivate and preserve relationships with key MinHR officials and institutions such as NIEPA and NCERT.

SSA is a Performance-Based Reform. It rewards good planning and it rewards the achievement of agreed-upon milestones. As such, it lends itself rather well to USAID performance-based disbursement, which in turn reinforces USAID’s emphasis upon results rather than inputs. The MinHR, at the national and state levels, has indicated that *ex post facto* reimbursement will not pose a problem for the GOI. It has informally indicated its acceptance of payment that is linked to the achievement of mutually agreed upon specific results, milestones and benchmarks. Monitoring of milestone indicators or benchmarks should not pose a problem.

The MinHR has indicated that USAID can support the implementation of SSA in a discreet geographic area (district or districts) or it can support the reform horizontally by funding a “theme” such as girls’ education. We believe that it makes better sense to fund vertically, i.e., to support all activities within a fixed geographic area, since SSA corresponds to all three of the Mission’s sub-IRs and since attribution will be clear and direct, if USAID funds the totality of activities. DPEP is also a performance-based initiative. It has functioned quite effectively for seven years with outstanding results. USAID will need to assure that its disbursement is additional and not substitutional. The MinHR is aware of this fact.

This team feels that, if administratively and politically feasible, the performance-based mode of disbursement is preferred. However, In view of the fact that regulations on the performance based mode of disbursement have not yet been finalized in Washington, and since the Mission is not prepared to do non-project assistance, we have developed a contingency section that will provide additional options.

Proposed/Estimated cost and duration: The cost of participation in SSA is high and probably not feasible at a level of less than \$10 million per annum for “vertical” participation. If it wishes to participate in two states, it will require more. Since the share of state contribution to SSA is scheduled to increase gradually over time, the corresponding cost of the federal share will decline, making it possible to have greater impact over a broader area. The actual cost per state or per district is not yet known and should become clearer over the next few months. The MinHR does not yet know the precise levels of funding that it can expect for SSA¹⁶ which will dictate the gap and what it needs to acquire from the donor community.

If USAID participates in SSA, it should do so for at least five years.¹⁷

Results and Indicators: SSA has established norms for interventions under the reform that can be transformed easily into a results package with indicators and benchmarks. To name a few:

- One teacher for every 40 children in primary and upper primary.
- School within one kilometer of every habitation.
- A room for every teacher in primary and upper primary.
- Free textbooks for all girls
- Ceiling of 33% of SSA funds used for construction.
- 20 days of in-service training for all teachers.
- Full transparency on costs of training and all other costs at all levels of government
- Training for community leaders (max 8 per village; 2 days per year)
- Bridge courses, Remedial courses, and residential centers for out-of-school children.

Design Issues: The MinHR has made it clear that it expects USAID and the donor community to contribute to the education sector within the framework of SSA. Whereas there may be other than direct means of supporting SSA, the MinHR wants all discussion to take place at the national level and discourages direct involvement with states or even with NGOs. Whereas the MinHR has agreed to consider several “pre-SSA implementation activities” such as use of ICT and school health and sanitation, it expects that mainstream activities be done through SSA. There may be some exceptions to this rule with certain long established NGOs and UN organizations.

¹⁶ It should know by April.

¹⁷ The EC has committed 200 million Euros over seven years.

The design team will need to work very closely with appropriate MinHR, NCERT and NIEPA officials at both the national and state levels to develop a performance-based results package or some other modality of assistance that is acceptable to all. If the performance based mode is chosen, the Agency needs to finalize its regulations for this mode of assistance. This type of assistance will require very careful design, not only in the measurement of results and benchmarks, but also in the valuation process.

Key Next Steps: USAID's planning for participation in SSA cannot outpace the GOI's own planning. At the moment, the Mission is in a reactive mode, awaiting clarification from the MinHR on the rules of engagement, geographical preferences, cost and substance. It is essential, over the next few weeks, that the Mission make the strongest possible case for an OYB that is high enough to enable participation in SSA; \$10 million per annum would appear to be the minimal threshold for participation in only one state. Since the Mission wishes to participate in two states, a significantly higher level is better.

It appears that U.S. participation in SSA will be at a cost of between \$3-6 per child per annum. The aggregate cost of involvement from district to district and state to state will vary depending upon population and the current status of educational infrastructure. Once the Mission's funding levels are known, it needs to await further clarification from the MinHR.

When the MinHR and the Mission are ready to take SSA to the next step, it should re-engage a consulting team to undertake appropriate visitations and begin to develop a results package and implementation plan with national and state officials.

B. Companion SSA Support Activity

Sub-IR Linkage/Relationship: The Companion SSA Support Activity will contribute to all three sub-IRs under IR 5.1.

Statement of the Problem: USAID experience with education sector reform programs in other countries points strongly to the need for additional project resources to be available to maximize chances for success. No matter how well the reforms are constructed, no matter how strong partner commitment is, inevitably the need arises during program execution for targeted assistance to address informational needs, capacity gaps and implementation bottlenecks. In addition, USAID's own requirements for regular reporting on results often inappropriately burdens implementers who are already fully engaged in the challenges of achieving program results. To undertake a sizeable sector reform program without an accompanying project that can be rapidly responsive to these needs as they arise would be to seriously jeopardize full and timely achievement of USAID-supported results.

Proposed Intervention: The Companion Support Activity will provide financial and technical resources in tandem with the Mission's SSA Support Results Package to allow the Mission to respond quickly to SSA-related sector needs as they arise, especially those that are linked to performance indicators.

Objective: To facilitate achievement of GOI and USAID/India education reform objectives by providing targeted support to key SSA elements that are particularly relevant to Karnataka, its northeast districts and possibly other geographic focus areas.

Rationale: The Mission's broad support to primary education will provide much needed resources to the GOI in order to accomplish SSA objectives in Karnataka and possibly other areas. The funds will be disbursed against agreed upon outcomes related specifically to those SSA components that are closely linked to Mission sub-IRs. It is in the interests of all development partners to assure that these performance measures are met well and on time. To maximize the chances for success a companion activity to USAID's general support to SSA is needed. This Results Package will provide a standby facility for addressing needs related to performance achievement and measurement. Such a facility will allow opportunistic as well as planned interventions at the central, state, district and local levels.

Description: Until the major SSA support package is designed and endorsed by the cooperating partners, it is impossible to describe the companion activity with any degree of specificity. However, based on the objectives and challenges cited in SSA, the recommendations of the recent Eduvision report (*Shaping Education in Karnataka*) and the observations of the two USAID sector review teams, there are several areas that are likely to need particular attention and additional resources, irrespective of the final design outcome. These areas include (listed in order of priority related to the Mission's strategic interests):

- Decentralized management and planning of the elementary education system (in Karnataka and other targeted areas): SSA gives attention to the need for improvements as sector management and planning roles become more decentralized, but is vague on how these will occur. It seems likely that the student and school-level gains that SSA promotes will be handicapped by lack of adequate capacities at the district and block levels, especially those unaffected by the predecessor DPEP programs. More attention is also needed regarding the use of micro-planning and customized interventions that address specific (community-based) factors related to school non-attendees and dropouts.
- Results monitoring and measurement: USAID imposes a rather heavy burden on its partners for reporting on progress and results. The SSA companion activity would be helpful to them by building in human and financial resources for addressing these needs.
- Improved capacity for research and analysis on issues relating to school access and quality, particularly as this pertains to vulnerable youth and girls: capacity seems to be lacking at the state and district level for undertaking research and analysis of issues important to SSA achievements. DCERT has a research role, but seems unconnected to the real locus of programming and policy making. At lower levels, the district *panchayats* have vast influence and funding power

regarding local education policies and priorities. These bodies, as well as the district education offices, need access to clearly articulated and supported choices on education issues. While the data (principally in DPEP districts) may exist, attention is needed for their interpretation and application locally. This will involve, *inter-alia*, improvements in the way districts use and value their EMISs.

- Support discrete research (and action research) studies related to access and quality concerns: notwithstanding the capacity strengthening needs mentioned above, there is need to give attention to particular research studies where the findings will inform SSA applications in the near term. These include strategies for effectively dealing with “small” schools (multi-grading is a large concern); resource, access and internal efficiency issues surrounding rationalizing upper primary schools with transitioning lower primary graduates; and cost-effective methods of for teacher upgrading, particularly in curriculum content mastery.
- Organizational restructuring (e.g., DIETs, DSCERT, DPEP project offices) that is needed with respect to decentralization and SSA: similar to the above concern, SSA recognizes that the roles of these organizations need to be reviewed and rationalized with respect to each other and sector developments, but does not devote significant resources to the task. The DIETs in particular have a potentially important role to play in SSA in teacher support and upgrading, yet there seems to be more confusion than vision as to how this will happen.
- Links to USAID efforts to support fiscal management reform in Karnataka: USAID intends to work with the Karnataka government to make its system of budgeting and fiscal management more analytically based and transparent. These needs are also apparent within the state education planning and finance units. Working on reforms simultaneously should yield benefits particularly in favor of the education given the high priority state executive and legislative leaders are giving to the sector. The introduction of resource allocation tools in education budgeting could be particularly useful in this regard.
- Building knowledge through US-India institutional exchanges and linkages: the US system of education has a lot to offer India in terms of models of governance, funding, performance assessments and the like. There are few opportunities for Indian education practitioners, administrators, policy- makers and researchers to learn first-hand from the US experience. Providing resources and opportunity for these individuals to share and learn from their US counterparts would yield important benefits to both parties.

Modality and Partners: The mechanism to be used for this activity needs to be chosen carefully. The options include a direct Mission contract or cooperative agreement with a US institution, a buy-in to a central project such as EQUIP, and a direct contract with one of the pre-qualifying institutions that fall under the recently established Mobis facility.

Ideally, the direct Mission contract/CA route is best suited since it can be precisely shaped and controlled according to Mission needs; however, it imposes the maximum management requirements for USAID staff. A buy-in to a central project like EQUIP is relatively easy, can probably be formulated to suit program requirements, but is circumscribed by the interests of the CTO in Washington and to the capacities of the participating CAs.

MOBIS seems a good candidate for consideration since the contract can be for up to 10-years, there is no financial ceiling (unlike other IQC-like mechanisms), and an RFP can be directed to a short-list of qualifying firms, some of which have long and solid experience working with USAID on education reform programs. The downside is that being a new instrument for acquiring technical services, it is not clear at this point what complications this expeditious route may bring. Reportedly, the ANE Bureau is currently pursuing a Mobis contract for education activities elsewhere in the region. As experience is gained, the Mission will be able to benefit from ANE counsel on this option.

In addition to the implementation contractor/CA, other partners central to the Companion Support Activity will include the GOI and Karnataka government officials, northeast Karnataka education and district officials, other donor and NGOs working in the region, and the variety of other corporate and philanthropic entities that are committed to improving elementary education in the state.

Proposed/Estimated Duration:

- 5 to 7 years

Results and Indicators (Illustrative):

- evidence of greater use of data and analysis for decision-making at state and district levels
- existence of customized approaches to attracting and retaining vulnerable youth into elementary schools
- statements and examples of clearly defined roles regarding SSA objectives for the DIETs and DSCERT
- increased use of research findings in formulating policies and program priorities
- transparency of budgeting processes in the education sector.

Design Issues:

- negotiate with appropriate GOI/Karnataka authorities the level and nature of technical services (TA, training) appropriate to the activity
- meeting TA needs principally if not exclusively through Indian firms and individuals

Key Next Steps:

- decide on the mechanism best suited to Mission needs and management capacities for procuring technical services under the activity

V. CONTINGENCY EDUCATION SECTOR SUPPORT OPTIONS

In view of the possibility that USAID is unable to find a modality to allow vertical budgetary support of the MinHR SSA initiative, the Mission should be prepared to pursue other options that will enable it to carry out SO 5 and IR 1 of its strategy. SSA is the best (and perhaps the only) vehicle and will enable the Mission to participate substantially in the education sector. It is noted that a companion project, which funds U.S. and Indian technical assistance for a variety of purposes will accompany any direct support to SSA in order to build capacity at the state level.

However, in the event that USAID is unable to agree on a performance based modality for “vertical” cooperation, and since it has already ruled out non-project assistance, there may be some leeway to support SSA in a “horizontal” way by identifying a “theme” of SSA, such as social mobilization, bridge programs, remedial education and alternate schools, targeted at vulnerable children, which could be supported in a more traditional manner. Although it is unlikely that the MinHR will allow a standard technical assistance mode, USAID may be able to develop an umbrella NGO support vehicle through an international NGO or UN instrument to deliver training under the SSA. Since SSA already embraces the concept of social mobilization, bridge training, alternate schools and remedial education, this approach may be acceptable to the MinHR.

There are several Foundations and/or NGOs that have considerable capacity in this regard. The largest is the Pratham Group, which is a well-endowed network of 16, registered charities, with a high level of NRI funding, and an impressive corporate board. They are functioning in six states, doing social mobilization and bridge schools with apparently good results. They work primarily in cities, which is a high priority for USAID. They too, are restricted by MinHR policy from receiving funding directly from bilateral donors, but there may be ways of working with them along the lines of the Dutch NOVIB, which provides them with significant resources.

Another group through which USAID may wish to channel resources to engage vulnerable children is the Azim Premji Foundation. The team visited the Azim Premji Foundation and met with several of its principals including the Executive Director. The team visited several Premji CLCs (Computer Learning Centers) in Karnataka. The Azim Premji Foundation has developed a geographically and sectorally ambitious program to support the objectives of SSA in a number of ways ranging from community mobilization¹⁸ to ICT interventions. It is a world class, well endowed organization whose motivations are purely humanitarian. The Foundation reflects growing corporate support for education in the same manner as The Reddy Foundation, the Pratham Group and others. The team was most impressed by the process in which teachers were being involved at the headquarters in Bangalore to develop appropriate software to improve subject matter content learning. Should the Mission wish to utilize the horizontal mode of support to SSA, it may look as follows:

¹⁸ Which is often contracted out.

A. Social Mobilization Package for Out-of-School Children in Rural and Urban Areas

Sub-IR Linkage/Relationship: The proposed intervention has direct links to Sub IR 5.1.1 (Strengthened formal and alternative school capacity for enrollment and retention of vulnerable children, especially girls).

Proposed Intervention: The activity involves providing financial and technical support to NGOs to devise and implement localized strategies for addressing the problem of out-of-school children especially girls and bringing them back to school. Other target groups involve special groups like child labor, street children, adolescent girls, and children of migrating families.

There are four broad focus areas: (a) establishing community schools/ alternative centers for small un-served habitations, (b) mainstreaming of children through bridge and reinforcement courses of different duration, (c) improvement of information base to track out-of- school children on a regular basis, and (d) developing training and evaluation support systems for teachers for improving classroom teaching/ learning process and diagnosing learners' needs.

Each intervention will have a strong social mobilization focus and will ensure equitable access to education of acceptable quality. Gender and social sensitivity will be integral to the teacher training process.

The geographic focus would be the rural areas and urban slums of Karnataka and possibly areas in a second (yet to be determined) state with historically under-served populations.

Objective: The objective is to facilitate the achievement of GOI and USAID/India education reform objectives by promoting direct and targeted improvements to education for out-of- school children especially girls in seven districts of Northern Karnataka and urban slums of Bangalore and another state to be determined in consultation with GOI's MinHR.

Rationale: Despite significant achievements in elementary education enrollments in India, about 59 million children are estimated to be out of school. These comprise mostly the SC/ST, girls, working children, disabled children, children in difficult circumstances, religious minorities and the urban deprived. About 100,000 habitations are still without schools. Estimates also reveal that between 15 to 29 million urban deprived children are either out-of-school or receive poor quality of education through government or local body schools. Studies have also shown that around 25 percent of the urban children from the poorer sections are not yet enrolled. Girls are at more risk than boys are as they are prematurely married off and burdened with early motherhood.

Experience of many donor-assisted programs in Indian states (Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Gujarat, other DPEP states, etc.) indicates that the provision of community schools/alternative centers for the younger age group children and bridge and

reinforcement courses for the older ones (8-14 years) has helped in withdrawing children especially girls from work and sibling care and in ensuring their re-entry into mainstream schools. Successful initiatives in the country need to be up-scaled in both rural and urban areas. GOI's own policy framework recognizes the importance of broadening implementation of alternative innovative schemes of education, including those of bridge and reinforcement courses to hitherto untouched areas, such as the municipalities. The need for formulating special strategies for the hardest to reach groups is well supported by the current educational reform program of SSA.

Description: In Karnataka's seven northern districts, more than 680, 000 children continue to remain out-of-school. Among the urban areas, Bangalore city alone has about 100,000 children who remain deprived of any experience of elementary education. The Government of Karnataka had introduced special programs for out of school children in collaboration with NGO's such as the Azim Premji Foundation. These initiatives included support to alternative schools under the scheme '*Vidya Chetana*' and to bridge courses under the '*Chinnara Angala*' program. However, the spread of these courses has remained weak and requires considerable expansion to cover the non-enrolled and dropout children in 43 blocks of northern Karnataka. The remedial courses introduced to provide support to the mainstreamed children also require considerable restructuring to provide ongoing support to teachers in handling differentiated learning needs of children. Current information systems do not track out-of-school children on a regular basis. The support to this program will benefit a large number of never enrolled and dropout children whether residing in rural or urban locations.

Modality and Partners: In view of the fact that USAID has already sponsored a great deal of work through NGOs targeted towards out-of-school children, the team endorses this approach. Support to NGOs (such as Pratham, Azim Premji Foundation and others to be identified) could be through a bilateral agreement with UNDP or through an umbrella grant to a large international NGO.

Proposed/Estimated Duration:

- 3 to 5 years

Results and Indicators:

- Community/alternative schools set up and functioning.
- Residential camps and motivation centers for children established and functioning.
- Communities mobilized and Village Education Committees / Local bodies/ School Management Committees sensitized to program objectives and concerns.
- Teachers trained and support systems in place.
- Improved access, retention and transition rates (children mainstreamed).
- X numbers of out-of- school children engaged in learning.
- X numbers of out-of –school children mainstreamed in formal schools.
- Improved information systems to track out-of-school children in place and used to inform planning (at all levels).

Design Issues:

- Explore state to be supported in addition to Karnataka and initiate dialogue with concerned authorities.
- Explore interest and capacity of partners especially to expand geographically.
- Reach agreement on roles and responsibilities (UNDP, NGOs, state governments and district authorities).
- Finalize strategy with concerned states and prepare implementation plan.
- Review and restructure training programs; and information systems.
- Firmer cost estimates and time frame.

Key Next Steps:

- Dialogue with MinHR to establish and authorize modality, preferably within SSA.
- Dialogue with UNDP and reach agreement on modalities.
- Dialogue with NGOs and state partners.

A Caveat: Bridge and alternate school programs cannot outpace the capacity of the formal school system to “mainstream” children who are ready to enroll. As an official of the Pratham Group said, “We should not risk building bridges to nowhere.” This is a strong rationale for vertical support of an entire geographical area. It allows far greater control of relational variables.

B. Other Contingency Options

A second contingency approach would be to carefully review, analyze and evaluate the impact of computer-aided interventions, including the proposed Educational Technology Support Results Package, with a view toward scaling up successful efforts in the region, and even more widely in other areas of the country. There appears to be broad latitude for geographic and content expansion, and for interfacing with other educational technology efforts in India such as the Center for Learning Resources Instructional Radio project and the Indira Gandhi National Open University Distance Teacher Education program, among others.

VI. MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS FOR THE MISSION

There are significant management implications for the Mission as a result of supporting elementary education in India. The Office of Social Development has only been involved in the sector in peripheral ways, and is adequately staffed for these programs. The new strategy, however, calls for a much more robust sector involvement both financially and technically. The following assessment is based on the assumption that the Mission will successfully negotiate a comprehensive program of support to the sector with the GOI. If this does not happen, the recommendations should be scaled back accordingly.

The issues surrounding IR 5.1 are addressable yet complex, and will require a staff that both has detailed knowledge of education as well as the mechanisms that USAID has available to it to undertake support efforts. Currently, there is excellent knowledge of India's education sector and development challenges on OSD's staff. These staff need to be supplemented.

It is difficult to recommend that the Mission pursue getting a USDH Foreign Service education officer to replace the OSD Chief when she leaves next year. The chances of getting a seasoned education officer, someone capable of attending to the range of programs that fall within the OSD's scope, would be very problematic. The supply of qualified and experienced backstop 60 officers has been so reduced over the past several years as to make this option untenable.

Nonetheless, there is great need for an education specialist in OSD who has a broad view of sector reform efforts being undertaken internationally, both in developing and developed countries. This person must also have experience in managing or implementing sizable education programs for USAID, and be familiar with the complexities of working through contracts and grants (directly and/or through buy-ins to central activities) to accomplish USAID objectives and fulfill its requirements.

The first recommendation is to replace the incumbent with a GDO or other technical FSO with solid experience in the social sectors. To complement this person, a New Entry Professional (NEP) in education should be identified and recruited to oversee the education portfolio. Education NEPs are in relatively good supply, and generally possess high academic qualifications coupled with significant overseas experience. While they are new to USAID, they are not new to the challenges of education reform as practiced in other parts of the world. A new US direct hire position would need to be established for the NEP position.

To supplement, support and train an Education NEP, the Mission should consider hiring a US-PSC, using unilateral IR 5.1 funds. This person should have significant experience managing and/or implementing USAID education programs. S/he should also be familiar with the various instruments that USAID uses in its assistance programs, including direct contracts, cooperative agreements and grants as well as field support arrangements through the 'Global Bureau'. This individual would likely only be needed for two to three years, time enough for the education support program to be well underway and for the NEP and other OSD staff to comfortably handle the variety of management and monitoring responsibilities that will come with the variety of results packages falling under the IR.

Finally, OSD should recruit one additional FSN education specialist to assist with the day-to-day management and monitoring of the new results packages. Whatever modality of support to the sector is decided upon, there will be significant additional burdens placed on OSD. If a performance-based program is negotiated, monitoring and assessing progress will require heightened staff attention; if a program based principally on non-bilateral avenues is decided, the number of grants and contracts that need active oversight

will also be sizeable. In either case, one more FSN professional grade staff member is recommended.

A final recommendation on management implications has impact on other Mission offices, particularly if the performance-based model is used. An SO/IR Team should be established that is committed and contributes serious time and assistance to program management. Representatives of the program and controllers office should be part of the team; those who have experience with similarly constructed programs should also belong, as should others who share interest in the program's goals. The ideal size of the core team is from 5 to 8 active members.

VII. IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE FOR SECTOR ENGAGEMENT

Month	Activity ¹⁹	Action	Comment	Lead Actors
April	1. EdT, Mys & Research	Secure Mission & GOI OK to work with KKA on proposed activities	Conduct partnering sessions to share ideas, reshape proposals	OSD Chief & staff
	2. EdT	Finalize SOW for Dot-EDU Asses Team; issue Task Order	SOW to be vetted with KKA/other TBD Education Office; identify local institutions to work with Dot-EDU team	OSD staff
	3. SSA	Meet with GOI on geographic foci and modality issues	Discuss KKA/CG/TBD states & performance-based mode	OSD Chief & staff
		Assess status/prospects for Perf-based mode; obtain OYB estimates for education	Confer with USAID/W (esp. ANE, GC & PPC), and Hill staff	Director, OSD Chief
		Gather info on SIFPSA audit and performance concerns	Involve Controller, PDEG, HPN offices	OSD staff
	4. Mys	Secure agree. in principle with UNICEF on expansion of program to northern districts	Dialogue with other partners, esp. KKA officials	OSD staff
	5. ReQ	Finalize SOW for Quality Study Team	SOW to be vetted with NIEPA, NCERT and KKA Education Office; identify institutions & modalities for involvement	OSD staff, GOI, KKA partners, NCERT & NIEPA
May	1. EdT	Assessment/Design Team begins work	OSD staff should work closely with team	Dot-EDU, G/HCD
	2. Mys	Continue to develop details for expansion	Dialogue with UNICEF and KKA partners	UNICEF, OSD staff
	3. SSA	Develop Action Memo to DIR for decision on performance-based disbursement model	Involve PDEG, Controller, Dep. Dir, RLA	OSD Chief, staff
	4. ReS	Finalize SOW for School Boards Study Tour	SOW to be vetted with MinHR, NIEPA, KKA Education Office	OSD staff
June	1. EdT	Team finalizes report and design	Design vetted with partners	OSD Chief, staff
	2. SSA	Continue dialogue with MinHR based on outcome of Action Memo	If performance-based model rejected, begin discussions on horizontal support possibilities	OSD Chief, staff

¹⁹ **Key:** EdT = Education Technology Activity
Mys = Mysore Water & Sanitation Activity
SSA = Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) Support Activity
ReQ = Research on School Quality Study
ReS = Research on School Boards Study
Soc = Social Mobilization Activity

Month	Activity¹⁹	Action	Comment	Lead Actors
	3. ReQ	Issue Task Order for field support to EQUIP	This depends on award of EQUIP CA	OSD staff
July	1. EdT	Prepare Task Order for Dot-EDU field support		OSD staff
	2. Mys	Establish clear roles/responsibilities for program start-up and implementation	Dialogue with UNICEF, State partners (KKA & CG)	UNICEF, OSD staff
	3. ReS	Prepare and issue Task Order		OSD staff
August	1. EdT	Task Order issued to Dot-EDU	Explore use of existing BEPS Task Order	OSD Chief OSD staff
	2. SSA	If vertical support possible, secure agreement on state targets Develop SOW for Design Team (Phase 2)	Dialogue with MinHR, target state officials	OSD Chief, staff
	3. Soc	If perf-based not viable, begin dialogue with UNDP &/or CRS on expansion of programs	Make determination on emphasis to be given to problems of urban out-of-school youth	OSD staff OSD Chief, staff
	4. ReQ	Quality Study team begins work	Team to carry out the study in collaboration with an Indian institution	EQUIP, NCERT/DSCERT, OSD staff
	5. ReS	Details on Study Tour developed, approved	Dialogue with participating partners	BEPS, OSD staff
September	1. SSA	Design Team (Phase 2) 3 week effort		Creative Assoc.
	2. Soc	Prepare agreements with partnering organizations on program expansion	Only if SSA bilateral support is dead-ended	UNDP/CRS, OSD staff
	3. ReQ	Quality Study set-up continues		EQUIP, NCERT/DSCERT
	4. ReS	Study Tour implemented		BEPS
October	1. Mys	Prepare grant documents and make award	Can occur in Sept. if need to obligate in FY-02	OSD staff, RCO
	2. SSA	Continue dialogue on support based on Phase 2 design findings	Consider broadening the partnership dialogue, e.g., other SSA involved donors & NGOs	OSD Chief, staff
	3. Soc	Prepare grant documents and make award		OSD staff, RCO
	4. ReQ	Quality Study continues; trials completed; US team returns for assessment		EQUIP, NCERT/DSCERT
	5. ReS	Study Tour team assesses experiences, writes final report & recommendations		BEPS, NIEPA, KKA Ed officials
November	1. EdT	IRI and ICT start-up activities begin		Dot-EDU
	2. ReQ & ReS	Dissemination of research findings	National level dissemination workshop (Ed. Secy, DPEP State Directors, select SCERT & SIEMAT members to participate); either GOI or NIEPA to host	EQUIP, GOI, NCERT, NCERT

Annex 1 People Contacted

NAME	TITLE	ORGANIZATION
Ranjekar, Dileep Mr.	Chief Executive Officer	Azim Premji Foundation
Madhukar, C.V. Mr.	Member, Executive Group	Azim Premji Foundation
Sumitha Ms.	Associate	Azin Premji Foundation
Raman, Jai Mr.	Member, Executive Group	Azin Premji Foundation
Raju, Mr. (& DPEP officers)	Administrative Officer, DPEP	DPEP Karnataka, GOKKA
Iyer, Srikanth B. Mr.	Chief Operations Officer	Edurite Technologies, Pvt. Ltd.
Ravi, G.S. Mr.	Co-Founder & President	Edurite Technologies, Pvt. Ltd.
Karikorpi, Mervi Ms.	Education Programme Coordinator	European Commission, Delhi Office
Rao, Mahaswar Mr.	Chief Executive Officer	Gulbarga District, Karnataka
Lakshminarayana, M. Mr.	Deputy Commissioner & District Magistrate	Gulbarga District, Karnataka
Vishnarath, H. Mr.	Minister of Education	Karnataka State Office of Education
Saksena, Meera C. Ms.	Principal Secretary for Primary & Secondary Education	Karnataka State Office of Education
Bhaskar, T. M. Vijay Mr.	Commissioner For Public Instruction	Karnataka State Office of Education
Somayji, H. Raghurama Mr.	State Programme Officer	Karnataka State Office of Education
Bai, Jalaja Ms.	Director, Dept of State Education, Research Training	Karnataka State Office of Education
Geetha, S. Ms.	Program Officer, Joint GOI/UN Education System	Karnataka State Office of Education
Sukanya, Ms.	Program Officer, Joint GOI/UN Education System	Karnataka State Office of Education
Tripati, Mr.	Secretary of Education	Ministry of Human Resource Development, GOI
Kaushik, Amit Mr.	Director, Dept. of Elementary Education & Literacy	Ministry of Human Resource Development, GOI
Bose, Sumit Mr.	Joint Secretary, Dept. of Elementary Education & Literacy	Ministry of Human Resource Development, GOI
Govinda, R. Dr.	Senior Fellow and Head (School Education)	National Institute of Educational Planning And Administration
Rao, Jagannatha Mr. (& staff of districts, blocks & DIETs)	Director of Primary & Secondary Education	Northeast Directorate, Karnataka State Office of Education
Chavan, Madhav Dr.	Founder & Programmes Director	PRATHAM
Banerji, Rukmini Dr	Director, Research & Evaluation	PRATHAM
Vishvanath, Umashankar Mr.	Vice President	Schoolnet India Limited
Shenoy, Satish Mr.	Country Manager-Virtual Classrooms	Schoolnet India Limited
Jangira, N. K. Mr.	Senior Education Specialist	The World Bank, Delhi Office
Shrivastava, S.K. Mr.	Senior Education Specialist (Human Development Sector, South Asia Region)	The World Bank, Headquarters
Kohli, Chetna Ms.	Project Officer (Education)	UNICEF, India Country Office
Ganguly, Sumita C. Ms.	Project Officer (Water & Environmental Sanitation)	UNICEF, India Country Office
Totino, Thomas A. Mr.	Controller	USAID/India
North, Walter Mr.	Mission Director	USAID/India
Bever, James Mr.	Deputy Mission Director	USAID/India
Barbiero, Carla Ms.	Director, Office of Social Development	USAID/India
Berry, Ram Mr.	Program Manager (Off. Of Environment, Energy & Enterprise)	USAID/India
Monga, Arun Mr.	Deputy Controller	USAID/India
Barbiero, Victor Mr.	Director, Office of Population, Health & Nutrition	USAID/India
Jena, Nalin Mr.	Education Specialist	USAID/India
Jain, Renu	Division Chief	USAID/India
Kathuria, Ashi K. Ms.	Deputy Director, Office of Social Development	USAID/India
Gupta, Madhumita Ms.	Senior Economist & Deputy Office Director	USAID/India
Bittle, Stark Mr.	Consultant, Partnership Initiative	USAID/India

Annex 2

Scope of Work for Dot-EDU Assessment Team

Introduction and Background

USAID/India is interested in improving elementary education in the underserved districts of Karnataka (and possibly similar areas of other states), believing that factors relating to poor quality are keeping a sizable number of children in this region from attending and remaining in school. Radio education was introduced in this area last year aimed at standard four pupils, and potentially represents an effective means for boosting learning in the early grades. This issue needs to be explored in more detail, with the specific notion of whether the programs need to be made more interactive. English, which will be taught as a subject in grade 3 rather than grade 5 starting next academic year, seems to be an excellent entry point for possible USAID support in this area, particularly given the Agency's long and notable work in Interactive Radio Instruction (IRI).

There are also more general issues of importance in the education technology field. Karnataka is a hub for Information-Communications Technologies (ICT) in India and as such both philanthropic and profit making interests are actively engaged in promoting ICT related learning systems for primary and secondary schools. State and local officials by and large welcome these developments and can imagine their potential for boosting learning. Yet they also feel unequipped to sort through the complex pedagogical, technical and financial factors that should inform strategic choices relating to ICT. USAID, through G/HCD's Dot-EDU project is the appropriate vehicle for exploring these issues further, with the intention that this will lead to a robust Results Package in education technology aimed at supporting the Mission's sub-IR5.1.2. This SOW represents the first step: an assessment of the needs and support opportunities in this area. It is anticipated that this assessment will lead to a comprehensive engagement strategy in ICT-related issues for the next two to three years at a minimum.

Objectives

There are five objectives for the Dot-EDU Assessment Team:

- to examine the technical and institutional feasibility and means for developing and implementing an Interactive Radio English program for primary schools in northeastern Karnataka, starting with grade three;
- to explore other areas that other ICT-mediated interventions might be beneficial to the interests of Karnataka (and other) education officials, e.g., introducing "interactivity" into other instructional radio broadcasts, using radio and/or computer-aided learning for upgrading teachers' knowledge in core subject areas;
- to develop a plan for strengthening the abilities of education policy makers in Karnataka (and elsewhere) for weighing costs, benefits and strategic options in the use of promising ICT interventions in elementary schools;
- to assess the interests and capacities of the key stakeholders in ICT-mediated learning systems with the view of the roles they might play in the introduction and spread of these innovations, with particular attention to the above objectives;

- using the outcomes of the above to frame a Results Package and budget for consideration by USAID/India and its partners.

Statement of Work

The Dot-EDU Assessment Team will explore the needs and opportunities for USAID/India to support ICT-mediated learning systems in Karnataka. The work will involve discussions with stakeholders and partners, travel to and within Karnataka and an analysis of the technical and institutional capacities of government and non-government entities involved in and affected by ICT interventions. The Mission may also ask the team to explore similar issues in another state or two. Chattisgarh, Jarkhand and perhaps a northeastern state are possible candidates in this regard. This additional assessment may be piggy-backed onto the initial one, or could become the focus of a subsequent, pre-implementation effort.

In carrying out its work, the Team must adhere to several principles of importance to the Mission's strategic interests in education. First, ICT learning systems are mere tools that must offer improved learning that is affordable and sustainable. This relates to the sub-intermediate results for strengthening education system capacities for addressing the needs of vulnerable children and for undertaking effective and efficient decentralized management education.

Second, the greatest possible use must be made of Indian firms and individuals in any Results Package that arises from the assessment. This is in keeping with the Mission's belief that a wealth of human resources both in the public and private sectors is available that should be aggressively tapped for participation in USAID's development efforts. Consistent with this, a principle of partnership in USAID's work is critical. This not only relates to usual development partners in the donor and government sectors, but also to other private and public institutions that have a stake in education.

Capacity-building is also central to this activity, and thus must be a leading and explicit objective of any of its elements to ensure improved systems are sustained beyond the life of the Results Package. This might, for example, involve establishing institution-to-institution professional linkages (US-India) as part of the intervention. Finally, and without compromising the above principles, the effort should capitalize on the interests of private corporate and non-profit organizations (particularly in KKA) to contribute to primary education improvement through the use of ICT.

The Team will specifically explore opportunities and means for developing an IRI program in English for standard 3 students in northeast Karnataka, with the intention that the program will be extended to higher grades as the cohort advances. It will also investigate receptivity among stakeholders for imbedding more interactivity and teacher support into the programs currently being developed and broadcast to standard 4 pupils in several subjects.

The Team should consider with the partners the feasibility of using appropriate ICT approaches for upgrading the knowledge of elementary teachers, perhaps by installing

computer stations and CD ROM-based instructional materials in the block Resource Centers. The Karnataka Education Task Force has cited lack of mastery by primary teachers of core subject material as a critical barrier to enhanced learning. Experimenting with ICT techniques could be useful in devising a broad strategy for teacher upgrading.

The Team needs to assess capacities and skills required for enabling state and local education officials to assess the cost and pedagogical effectiveness of a variety of ICT classroom interventions, many of which are already being deployed around Karnataka. There is intense interest among corporate, philanthropic and NGO communities for introducing ICT in schools, both at secondary and primary levels. While government officials are generally supportive of such efforts, they feel handicapped in facing issues such as pedagogical benefits, replication, maintenance, sustainability, etc. These issues are of particular concern when dealing with rural, poorly endowed primary schools.

Related to the above, the Team will explore the nature and magnitude of interest of non-governmental entities in ICT-mediated instruction. As mentioned, several experiments have begun, notably the Azim Premji Foundation effort to set up computerized classrooms (“Community Learning Centers”) in primary schools throughout the state. The Indian-American Foundation is also contributing computers to Karnataka schools, using a local software firm, Edurite Technologies, as its implementation agent. Reportedly several Karnataka NGOs are also involved in the sector. The challenge for the State is to capitalize on the good will and intentions that such endeavors represent, without hobbling the system with new learning systems that might be inappropriate or unsustainable in the long term. The Team needs to develop ways to deal responsibly with the various forces that will shape ICT use and spread in the schools of Karnataka, and elsewhere in the country.

On the assumption that the team will have defined a number of feasible areas for Dot-EDU intervention(s) within Karnataka as well as in an additional one or two states where ICT related learning and teaching systems would benefit from capacity strengthening, the following areas for sizeable, multi-year support might include:

- developing and implementing an interactive radio English program
- introducing other ICT-mediated interventions, e.g., introducing interactivity into other instructional radio broadcasts, using radio and/or computer-aided learning for upgrading teachers knowledge in core subjects
- strengthening the abilities of education policy planners and makers at the center and KKA and one or two other states for weighing the costs
- using the outcomes of the above to develop viable proposals and budgets for public and/or private investment in educational ICT.

Timing and Level of Effort

The Dot-EDU Assessment team should plan to start work in India in early May 2002. The 3 to 4 person team will be comprised of expatriate and Indian educators, who singularly or in combination represent skills and experience in education technology (especially radio), technical and financial analyses, learning assessments and policy research. It is anticipated that the expatriate team members will need to stay in India for

three to four weeks. The Indian member(s) may need to start work ahead of the others' arrival in order for appropriate materials to be gathered, logistics of meetings and travel to be arranged.

Proposed Schedule

May 1-4: Indian consultant gathers information, makes arrangements for meetings and travel of team
 May 6: Entire team starts work in Delhi
 May 9: Team travels to Bangalore, Karnataka to discussions with partners and stakeholders
 May 13: Team travels to northeastern Karnataka to pursue objectives specifically related to IRI
 May 17: Team returns to Bangalore to continue dialogue and brief education officials on IRI possibilities
 May 18/20: Team returns to Delhi to complete its work, de-brief USAID/India staff and write draft report
 May 26: Non-Indian members return to US to finalize report and share with G/HCD and Dot.EDU officials
 May 31: Final report submitted to USAID/India

Management of the Task

Arrangements for the identification and management of the team will be done collaboratively with USAID/India, G/HCD's Dot-EDU CTO and Dot-EDU's prime CA (Educational Development Center). USAID/India's Office of Social Development will provide general guidance regarding its strategic interests in the activity, but day-to-day management of the team will be handled by the team leader, and overseen by EDC's Dot-EDU's project staff.

Deliverables

Dot-EDU will issue a final report to USAID/India by May 31, 2002 on the findings of the Assessment Team. This report will contain a detailed description of the methods, findings and conclusions for each of the assessment objectives, as well as a list of recommendations with costs for how USAID/India might support a follow-on activity.

Estimated Costs

Initial assessment team	\$120,000
Follow-up assessment (if needed)	\$ 80,000
Follow-on interventions	
IRI English program in KKA	\$600,000
Additional IRI programming	\$200,000
Training & TA for ICT analytic skill building	\$200,000
Teacher upgrading programs using ICT	\$300,000
Application of ICT efforts to other states	\$500,000 - \$1,500,000
Total Minimum Requirement (without expanded coverage)	\$1,500,000
Total Requirements (assuming expansion)	\$2,000,000 - \$3,000,000

Annex 3

Scope of Work for School Quality Assessment Team

Introduction and Background

The quality of education in the schools of Karnataka²⁰ is uneven. Regional disparities are sizeable. There are wide inter-district variations in enrollment, grade repetition and retention. The seven northern districts (Gulbarga, Bellary, Bidar, Kopal, Bijapur, Raichur and Bagalkote) lag behind other regions in the proportion of children enrolled in school and completing even four years of education. While dropout rates throughout the State have been reduced to fewer than 5 percent, they range between 12-26 percent in the northern districts. Dropout rates among girls are particularly high. These northern districts are poor. They contain a high proportion of SC and ST population. It appears that in the past, the state government did not target its elementary education resources to this region.

The Commissioner of Education of the State of Karnataka has requested U.S cooperation in the development of a methodology that will enable him to assess the quality of the lower and upper primary schools throughout the State. The application of this methodology will eventually enable each succeeding level of government to target its resources in such a way that will enhance equity in the provision of quality education.

Objectives

There are 4 major objectives for this study.

1. To strengthen the capacity of state, district, block and primary school staff to assess the quality of education in Karnataka.
2. To develop an instrument that will establish norms and identify the kinds of inputs that constitute the minimal requirements for a quality school.
3. To test the instrument in a representative sampling of schools in areas of high achievement and in areas of low achievement during a trial phase.
4. To evaluate the results of the trial phase and refine the quality assessment instrument for application statewide.

It is anticipated, under SSA (Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan), the major national education reform, that this type of study will lead to school mapping activities which will enable the development of financial models that will target resources to schools with the greatest need. The model will be applied at the state level, and also at the district and block levels, so that at each level, equity with regard to quality enhancing inputs will be achieved.

²⁰ Karnataka is used only as an illustrative example. The quality issues it faces are shared by many other States. This study has been requested by the State of Karnataka, but could be mounted in other States.

Statement of Work

The quality assessment team will be a collaborative venture with the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT). A team, consisting of two American research specialists working alongside of two Indian research specialists, will interact with state, district, block and school personnel to establish the norms that constitute the minimal requirements for a quality school. There are, theoretically, two ways of assessing school quality:

- through an assessment of student achievement, which is commonly done in the United States, or
- through an assessment of inputs combined with efficiency indicators

We believe that the latter approach is more appropriate for India. Student achievement is not routinely measured on a standardized basis and too often reflects cultural and socio-economic factors rather than school quality. Since the ultimate purpose of this study is to level the field in terms of quality inputs, which are not always objectively verifiable, we believe that the identification of norms for minimal inputs is the appropriate approach. Having said this, we rely upon the judgment of the Indian and American research team to suggest alternate approaches that make better sense.

We will expect that the team adhere to certain principles.

- That the ultimate objective of this exercise is to build capacity for quality assessment at several levels of educational structure, national, state, district and block.
- That Indian expertise be consulted at each level of the structure. The approach is not to teach but to learn and share.
- That the team be cognizant of the Mission's focus upon vulnerable children and address the regional and locally specific needs of that population in terms of assessing quality.
- That the team be cognizant of the ultimate purpose of the study which is to enable school officials at each level of government to target their resources to those schools or communities which lag furthest behind.

The team should focus upon three types of quality indicators. These are illustrative, not inclusive.

- Standard Input-Level Indicators
 - Class size
 - Availability of texts and teaching materials.
 - Availability of furniture and equipment
 - Access to potable water and latrines
 - Teacher qualification
 - Access to in-service training
- Logistic or Social Indicators
 - Average distance to school
 - Functional School Management Development Committee
 - Qualifications/experience of school head

- School security²¹
- Efficiency Indicators
 - Repetition rates
 - Dropout rates²²
 - Pass rates at the level of transition to secondary school.

Timing and Level of Effort

The quality assessment team should be prepared to undertake the above study in Karnataka and one other state (to be determined). The team will consist of two U.S. education specialists working alongside of two Indian specialists who are seconded from NCERT²³. The U.S. specialists will have one week in the United States (Washington D.C.) to study school quality assessment in the United States, and previous or ongoing efforts targeted at school quality assessment throughout the world. They will then travel to Delhi for one week in Delhi, two weeks in Karnataka, and one additional week in a state to be determined, working with Indian colleagues on the development of an experimental model. The U.S. team will then return home. The model will then be administered in a diverse sample of schools within the two states over a period of six weeks. The U.S. team will then travel again to India and assemble with the Indian specialists for a period of two weeks to:

- study the data. It is from these sample tests that norms for minimal quality schools will be established.
- prepare a plan with state, district, and block officials to administer the quality assessment throughout the two states.

At this point, the study will end. However, as mentioned earlier the study is seen as part of a three phased process that will (i) prepare and apply a quality assessment model; (ii) analyze the data through a school mapping process; and (iii) develop equity enhancing resource allocation models. Phases two and three of the process will be addressed while the quality assessment is being implemented within the two states.

Proposed Schedule.²⁴

1. August 12-16. U.S. Consultant Literature Search, key meetings Washington, D.C.
2. August 15-16. Indian Specialists (NCERT) prepare for visit and make arrangements for meetings, as appropriate.
3. August 16. U.S. team travels to Delhi.
4. August 19-24. Entire team (Indian and U.S) in Delhi to develop methodology, meet with NIEPA and NCERT staff, and Plan remainder of assignment.

²¹ Security is an important factor for the girl child.

^{22,22} A cautious approach is needed. Efficiency indicators may not be directly linked to school quality. They may reflect a variety of non-school factors within a given community. Data collected through comparisons of efficiency will generally be more useful within a block than within the State.

²³ Although specialists are seconded by NCERT, they should receive an honorarium or stipend for participating on the team. The sum of \$200/ day plus hotel and perkier has been budgeted for this purpose.

²⁴ If EQUIP is not operational by June/July this activity can be postponed to September or October.

5. August 25. Team travels to Bangalore.
6. August 26-28. Bangalore for consultations with State Government, Mandya District, blocks and schools.
7. August 29-Sept 2. Gulbarga and environs. Consultations all levels
8. Sept 2. Travel-Hyderabad-Delhi-Chatissgarh²⁵
9. Sept 3-6. Chatissgarh and environs.
10. Sept 6 –10. Delhi Preparation of final model and plan for implementation in sampling of schools in both states.
11. September 11. Final Report submitted to NCERT and USAID.
12. October 25. Trial survey is completed. U.S. team travels to Delhi.
13. October 28-November 8. Indian and U.S. team review school assessment results, establish minimal quality norms and travel to both states to firm plans at state, district and block levels for statewide application of school assessment.

Management of the Task

The initial task is for the Commissioner of Education of the State of Karnataka to be consulted on the scope of work. He may wish to recommend the inclusion of DCERT or other staff on the research team. His comments may cause changes to the scope of work.

The team will be constituted collaboratively with USAID/India Office of Social Development, NCERT and the appropriate EQUIP²⁶ staff. Arrangements for the identification of the two person NCERT team should be subject to the approval of the state commissioners. USAID/OSD may provide general guidance, but all operations will be handled by the Team Leader with oversight by the contract firm.

Deliverables

An interim report will be provided to NCERT and USAID at the conclusion of the first phase (September 11) with a final report due on November 8. The final report will include the results of the trial assessment and a complete plan for the implementation of school quality assessments in both states.

²⁵ Chatissgarh is cited, but team may be asked to study alternate site.

²⁶ EQUIP is not yet functional but is expected to be operational by June.

Annex 4

Decentralization and School Governance A Research Study and Study Tour in Partnership with NIEPA

Introduction and Background

The federal and state education systems in India have much in common with that of the United States. Both empower communities to oversee the operations of the schools; India through its *Panchayati Raj* system and the U.S. through its school boards. Both countries have struggled to develop equity-enhancing resource allocation systems, particularly in cities. Although decentralization of schooling has been a fundamental characteristic of U.S. society for over 200 years, India is a relative newcomer to the concept.

Objectives

The objectives of this study tour are threefold.

- To strengthen the capacity of national, state, district, block and school-level officials to better manage the education process.
- To strengthen the role of civil society in the oversight of schools.
- To create partnerships for research and information sharing between U.S. professional education associations and Indian Institutions regarding governance and civil participation in the education sector.

Statement of Work

This activity will finance a study tour that is directed by two high level U.S. education specialists. The study tour will focus upon various issues relating to roles of school boards, state governments and the federal government in the financing and the management of education. A team of 10 Indian education professionals representing various levels of the education system and civil society in two target states will interact with researchers from the National Institute for Educational Research and Planning (NIEPA). The first task will be to identify a clear set of governance issues at the national level in succeeding lower levels of political organizations. In the U.S. at the national, state, county and community levels, and in India at the national, state, district, block and school levels, including the *Panchayati Raj* institutions. This task will be undertaken by U.S. specialists and NIEPA researchers prior to the study tour and field tested with input from other participants during the remainder of the study tour. During the U.S. portion of the tour, the team will visit officials of the U.S. Department of Education, at least two state government departments of education, a diverse sampling of at least six representative school boards (urban, suburban and rural), relevant professional associations of school administrators, teachers, parents and school boards. The team will review issues pertaining to:

- civil engagement in financial oversight of school systems and schools
- civil participation in content matter and pedagogy.

- resource allocation models at varying levels of political authority
- interaction between administrative and civil personnel in the management of the schools.
- problems that are particular to urban schools (financing and management)
- financing of the education system (national, state and community shares)
- the role of professional and parent organizations with regard to betterment of education.

This list of issues is not exclusive. The team should add to this list as needed during the initial consultation.

After a period of three days the NIEPA team will be joined by the other 10 participants. They will review the issues and study plan and travel together over a period of two weeks visiting state education officials, district school superintendents and their staffs, elementary and secondary school principals, teachers, boards of education and representatives of parent-teachers associations. The team will visit the headquarters of relevant professional associations in an effort to learn how they operate, what they do, and establish and maintain relationships. Finally, the team will visit at least two highly respected university colleges of education to assess the role of the university in educational research and teacher training.

Near the end of the study tour, the team will re-visit the issues that were earlier established and develop a report based upon the U.S. visitations. The entire team will then return to Delhi where the NIEPA and U.S. researchers will continue their work. They will visit the work sites of the other participants to learn more about how education is governed at various levels in India, and to assess whether there are lessons to be learned by both sides. The final report should constitute observations and recommendations for further study on the U.S. and on the Indian side. Every effort should be made to establish long-lasting institutional relationships among institutions on both sides concerning decentralization and the governance of education,

Timing and Level of Effort

The U.S. and Indian researchers should begin work independently under the guidance of the overall contractor on September 12, 2002. The four-person team and additional (to be determined) participants will be comprised of Indian educators and members of *Panchayat* who collectively represent the full range of civil and government organizations engaged in elementary education in India. All should speak English well. The NIEPA and U.S. research teams will remain in the U.S. for 17 days, and the participants for 14. All will return to India, with the U.S. team and NIEPA team engaged in visits to Indian institutions over a period of two weeks. The overall contractor will be responsible for all arrangements in the U.S and will identify an Indian respondent to take care of Indian meetings and logistics.

Proposed Schedule

- Sept 1 Participants identified; NIEPA and U.S consultants named.
- Sept 11 NIEPA team travels to the U.S.
- Sept 12 NIEPA and U.S. teams begin work in U.S
- Sept 14 10 participants travel to the U.S.
- Sept 16-27 Study Tour.
- Sept 27 Entire team travels to Delhi.
- Sept 30-Oct 11 U.S. and NIEPA team continue visitations with Indian institutions hosted by participants.
- Oct 12 Draft report due. Team travels back to U.S.
- Oct 21-25 Preparation of final report.
- Oct 25 Final report due.

Management of the Task

This activity was generated at the request of the Government of Karnataka. As such, it is imperative that the scope of work be carefully reviewed and modified, if needed, with the involvement of the Commissioner of Education and his staff. It should also be vetted in the second state, (to be determined), and with NIEPA. The selection of the participants should be a tripartite process, involving NIEPA, state and district officials and USAID. The activity should be mounted through a funding source/activity to be identified and should seek two highly qualified U.S. specialists with comprehensive knowledge of the relationships among federal, state and local departments of education. A university affiliation is highly desirable to achieve institutional relationships over the long term. Day-to-day management of the team will be the task of one of the consultants who serves as team leader.

Deliverables

The funding source/activity, to be identified, will issue a final report to USAID and NIEPA which will receive wide circulation among all of the Indian and U.S. institutions and individuals associated with the research and study tour. The final report will contain observations and recommendations for further study.

Results Package Framework by Sub-IR

IR 5.1: Improved Access to Elementary Education for Vulnerable Children, Especially Girls							
Sub IRs	Activities	Geographic Focus	FY-2002 Obligation?	Modality	Issues	Next Steps	LOP Cost Estimate
5.1.1: Out-of-school children provided with alternate schooling & mainstreamed into formal elementary schools	1. Soc. mobil, bridge & remedial/reinforcement program support	KKA (N) + other state; rural/urban	N/Y?	UNDP/CRS/ local NGO(s) (GDA, SARI)	Interest/capcty of partners, esp. to expand geogr'ly	Dialogue with potential partners	\$1.3 - \$2.6 Mil
	2. SSA support	KKA w/emphasis on north districts, + other state	N	Perform-based disbursement	Acceptability of modality	Final AID/W guidance; seek GOI OK	\$50+ Mil
5.1.2: Strengthened formal & alternate school capacity for enrollment & retention of vulnerable children, especially girls	1. Mysore H ₂ O/Sanit model expansion	KKA (N) + other state	N/Y?	UNICEF grant	Need costs & UNICEF agree.; define state & grantee roles	Dialogue with UNICEF	\$1.0 - \$2.0 Mil
	2. Increase gov't capacity in bridge & remedial programs	KKA (N) + other state; rural/urban	N	Local NGO(s) (GDA, SARI)	Interest/capcty of partners, esp. to expand geogr'ly	Dialogue with potential partners	Included in above estimates
	3. Improve educational technology capacities and radio programs	KKA w/emphasis on north districts	Y	Buy-in to Dot-EDU (G/HCD)	Assess existing IRI efforts & interest of partners	Finalize assessment team SOW; issue Task Order	\$2-3 Mil
	4. SSA support	KKA w/emphasis on north districts, + other state	N	Perform-based disbursement	Acceptability of modality	Final AID/W guidance; seek GOI OK	Included in above estimate
5.1.3: Promoting system reforms for improved decentralized educational services such as EMIS, micro-planning & monitoring	1. Companion SSA capacity & monitoring support	KKA w/emphasis on north districts, + other state	N	CA/contract: direct/ EQUIP/Mobis	USAID staff & mgmt capacity; OK on Expat. TA	Design will follow agree. on SSA support	\$ 3.0 - \$ 6.0 Mil
	2. Research & analyses (eg, SSA instit/decentral roles; school quality, governance & finance)	KKA w/emphasis on north districts	Y	Using existing funds in BEPS; buy-in to EQUIP	BEPS balance; timing of EQUIP award	Develop SOW for studies w/ partners & Indian anchor institution	\$0.2 Mil BEPS drawdown \$0.5 Mil EQUIP
	3. SSA support	KKA w/emphasis on north districts, + other state	N	Perform-based disbursement	Acceptability of modality	Final AID/W guidance; seek GOI OK	Included in above estimate

Results Package Framework by Obligation

IR 5.1: Improved Access to Elementary Education for Vulnerable Children, Especially Girls							
Activities	Sub-IR	Geographic Focus	FY-2002 Obligation?	Modality	Issues	Next Steps	LOP Cost Estimate
1. Research & analyses (eg, SSA instit/decentral roles; school quality, governance & finance)	5.1.3	KKA w/emphasis on north districts	Y	Use existing funds in BEPS; buy-in to EQUIP	BEPS balance; timing of EQUIP award	Develop SOW for studies w/ partners & Indian anchor institution	\$0.2 Mil BEPS; \$0.5 Mil EQUIP
2. Improve educational technology capacities and radio programs	5.1.2	KKA w/emphasis on north districts	Y	Buy-in to Dot-EDU (G/HCD)	Assess existing IRI efforts & interest of partners	Finalize assessment team SOW; issue Task Order	\$2-3 Mil
3. Mysore H ₂ O/Sanit model expansion	5.1.2	KKA (N) + other state	N/Y?	UNICEF grant	Need costs & UNICEF agree.; define state & grantee roles	Dialogue with UNICEF	\$1.0 - \$2.0 Mil
4. Soc. mobil, bridge & remedial/reinforcement program support	5.1.1	KKA (N) + other state; rural/urban	N/Y?	UNDP/CRS/ local NGO(s) (GDA, SARI)	Interest/capcty of partners, esp. to expand geogr'ly	Dialogue with potential partners	\$1.3 - \$2.6 Mil
1. Increase gov't capacity in bridge & remedial programs	5.1.2	KKA (N) + other state; rural/urban	N	Local NGO(s) (GDA, SARI)	Interest/capcty of partners, esp. to expand geogr'ly	Dialogue with potential partners	Included in above estimates
2. SSA support	5.1.1, 5.1.2, 5.1.3	KKA w/emphasis on north districts, + other state	N	Perform-based disbursement	Acceptability of modality	Final AID/W guidance; seek GOI OK	\$50+ Mil
3. Companion SSA capacity & monitoring support	5.1.3	KKA w/emphasis on north districts, + other state	N	CA/contract: direct/ EQUIP/Mobis	USAID staff & mgmt capacity; OK on Expat. TA	Design will follow agree. on SSA support	\$ 3.0 - \$ 6.0 Mil

Annex 6

Budget Estimates for Suggested Activities

1. Pre-Implementation Activities

a. Mysore Water & Sanitation Program:

- \$1 - \$2 million (500 - 1000 schools at an average cost of \$2,000 each) over 2 to 3 years.

b. Education Technology Support:

- \$120,000 for 1.5 months of initial assessment team
- \$2 - \$3 million over 3 years, depending on nature of inputs required and decisions on scope of ICT involvement beyond radio.

c. Research Studies:

School Quality Study

- \$145,000 total²⁷
 - Short term US TA: \$81,000 (87 days fully burdened)
 - Travel: Two persons, two r/t @\$3500. \$14,000
 - Per Diem U.S. contractors: \$15,000
 - Honorarium Indian Specialists: (76 days @ 200) \$30,400
 - Domestic Travel in India: \$4,000
 - Indian Personnel: Costs should be borne by NIEPA

School Board/Governance Study

- \$182,000 total (over a twelve-week period)
 - US TA (12 p/w): \$72,000 (fully burdened)
 - Hotel and per diem (U.S. 8 person/weeks): \$44,800
 - Hotel and per diem (US TA in India): \$5,600
 - Hotel and per diem (Indian TA in India): \$8,400
 - International travel: \$24,000
 - Domestic travel (in India): \$4,000
 - Domestic travel (U.S.): \$6,400
 - Contingency: \$16,500

2. Long-term (SSA) Program Support

a. Targeted SSA support (to Karnataka, elsewhere)

- \$10 million per annum for a minimum of 5 years

b. Companion SSA support activity

- \$3 - \$6 Million for 5 to 7 years

3. Contingency Education Sector Support Options

a. Social mobilization package for rural and urban non-enrolled

- \$1.3 - 2.6 million over five years as a minimum threshold, but the potential costs are very elastic. This type of activity could easily make good use of much larger amounts, perhaps up to \$10 million per annum.

²⁷ The Mission may wish to reserve funds for phases two and three estimated at \$150,000 and \$200,000 respectively.